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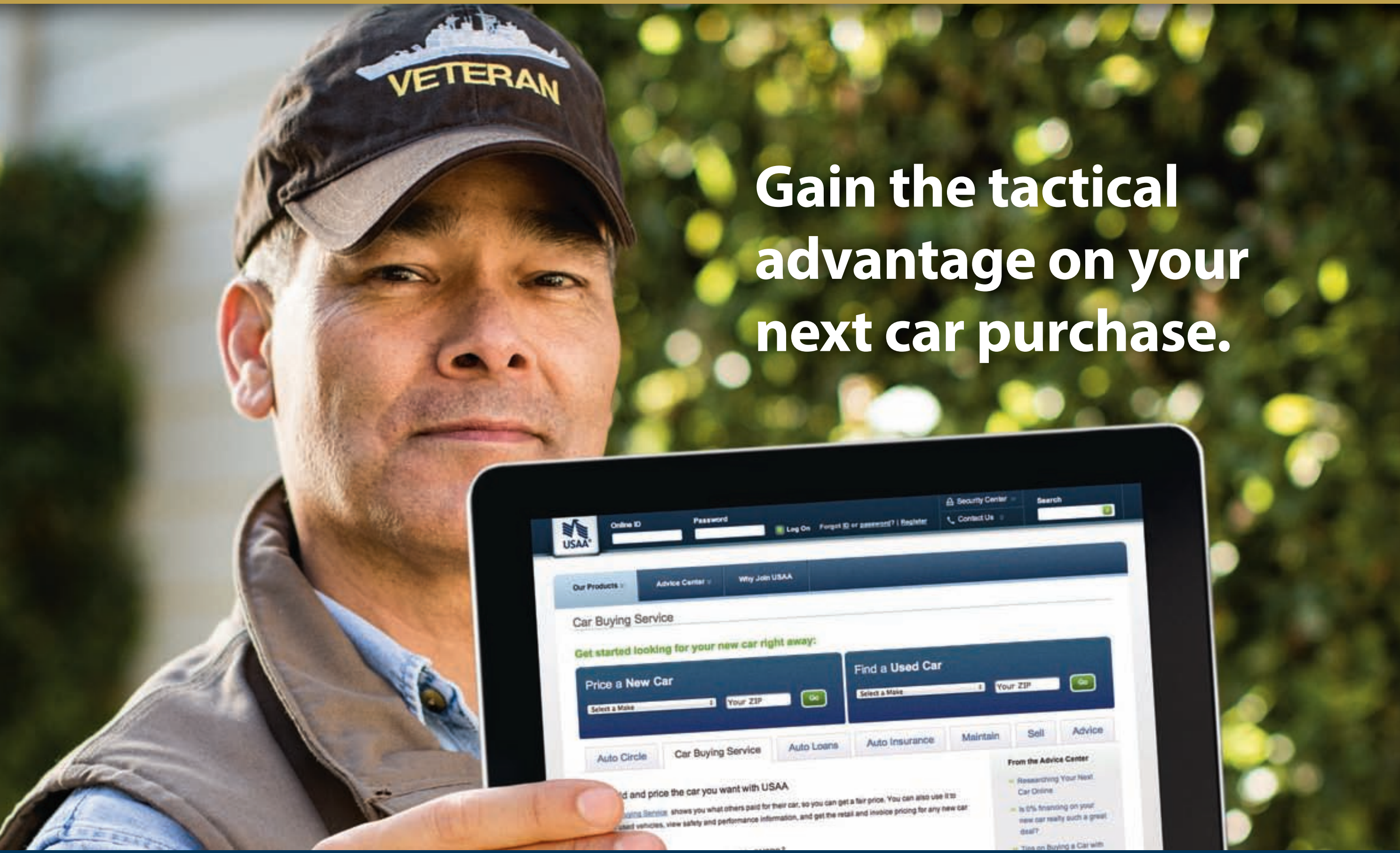

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A concert tour to remember

In 2009, the Holland American Legion Band – a community band founded and supported by Willard G. Leenhouts Post 6 of Holland, Mich. – traveled to Normandy to mark the 65th anniversary of D-Day with concerts throughout France and the Netherlands. The trip made such an impression on band members that they immediately began plannning a return for this month's 70th anniversary, says Thom Working, the band's director. About 50 of the band's 80-plus roster will make the journey, along with a few spouses, community members and Post 6's color guard.

Read more about the Holland band and its upcoming trip online.

www.legion.org/honor

Photo by Lucas Carter

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.4 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 14,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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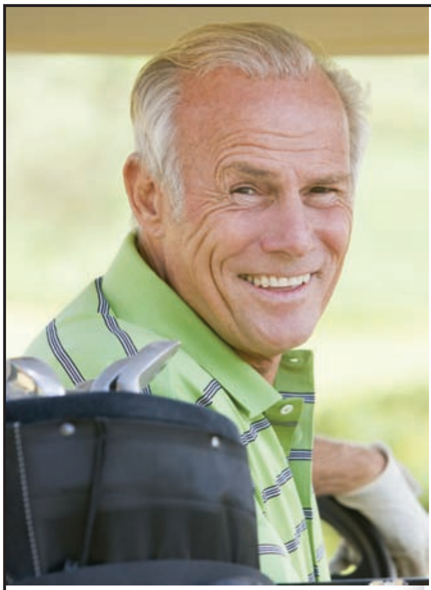

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‘On the Edge’

I commend Ken Olsen for his article (April). My own extensive use of VA medical facilities began more than 30 years ago with a complete severance of my spinal cord just below the shoulders. VA did an excellent seven-month job rehabilitating me to return to work in a wheelchair as a lawyer. With few exceptions, I have enjoyed that same level of care to this day.

I have consistently declined offers of painkillers, even Tylenol. For me, this has worked. I recommend that anyone refuse painkillers they can do without. In addition to the addiction problems, I believe that the artificial feeling of well-being produced by pills can lead to activity that aggravates the root cause of the pain.

Years ago, I was told by a doctor that my spinal-cord injury would take a decade off my life. The advice in this article must be valid, as I am now 93 and, other than that injury, in good health.

– Howard E. Hensleigh, Menlo Park, Calif.

Doctors in this country are inadequately trained to treat pain. Their only solution is prescribing pills. They treat the symptom, not the cause. I have experienced considerable pain myself, but have never taken pain pills and never will. There are alternatives: acupuncture, massage, spinal manipulation, meditation, visualization, chiropractics. I had a doctor who wanted to prescribe pain pills. I walked away.

– Richard Silbert, Walnut Creek, Calif.

Sadly, the patient’s voice is getting lost as the pendulum swings toward demonization of legally prescribed opioid medication. It’s almost as hard to live with these medications as it is to live without them.

Even after seven years at the same dosage, here is this veteran’s reality: you are physically dependent on your medication, but to everyone else, you’re an addict. Switching doctors for any reason becomes “trying to find Dr. Feelgood.” Don’t lose your medications, as your doctor will not replace them for any reason. Don’t lose your job, as most companies now require a pre-employment illegal-substance screening that you cannot pass. Be prepared to lose everything you have if you drive; you are liable in an incident, period. Unlike alcohol, the level or legality of opioids present in your blood is no defense. At work or at school, be prepared to work harder to compensate for the mental effects.

Opioids are a legitimate tool but hard to master. It takes fierce discipline to use all the tools you have and not succumb to the mirage of a few hours of relief the “easy” way.

– Jack Cain, Beaverton, Ore.

I want to express admiration for Justin Minyard and other disabled veterans who have sacrificed so much and must deal with such high levels of pain in the wake of their service-connected injuries. The dangers of the overuse of opioids, sometimes leading to addiction, are well known.

Still, some balance on the subject is needed. I am service-connected (50 percent) for my back following two surgeries and permanent nerve damage.

My chronic pain has been successfully treated with oxycodone (supplemented with acetaminophen) since 2011, enabling me to function as close to normally as possible. When used properly, neither overprescribed nor abused, this painkiller is a godsend.

– Paul Sauer, Lindenhurst, N.Y.

Not everyone ends up like Justin Minyard. While I have been on opioids for nearly 40 years, I have never had a drug problem, overdosed, tried to commit suicide or been depressed. This article would have you believe that everyone in the VA system on opioids is a druggie with no control over his life. I am now 70; my accident happened when I was 32.

VA sent me to law school, where I got my J.D., and I have owned numerous businesses. I was a real estate and mortgage broker, as well as a practicing attorney. If it wasn't for the opioids, I wouldn't have survived, because the pain I suffer is so severe I couldn't stand it. I just hope VA doesn't change its policies on opioids because of misplaced reactions.

– Steve Feldman, Seaside, Calif.

The use and abuse of narcotic medications is dependent on the relationship between patient and physician, and patients are equally responsible for declaring side effects and not having unrealistic expectations. This is very much like holding Chevrolet responsible for an accident due to negligent driving.

– Russell Lee-Wood, Barnesville, Ohio

'Heavy Duty'

On reading Whitney Pipkin's article (April) about youth obesity as a risk to our national security, I would like to add that it also means they are "too fat to work," making it a risk to our economy and our place in the world markets as well.

– John Sweeney, Portland, Ore.

When I decided to apply to be a National Guard chaplain, I weighed 240 pounds. I was able to get down to 190 when I went to the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) and stayed around 195 to 200 throughout my 22-year career. Without the physical requirements of the military I would not be as healthy as I am, or even alive. They are the best antidote to the epidemic of obesity.

– Alton J. Luder Jr., Dallas City, Ill.

I was surprised to find a factual error in this article: "President Dwight Eisenhower launched the Presidential Council on Youth Fitness in 1948." In 1948, our president was Harry S. Truman.

– Tom Egleston, Dunlap, Tenn.

'No Flags for the Fallen'

Regarding Ken Olsen's article (April), it is the mortuary's job to get a flag for the veteran's family, not just to direct them to where to obtain one. I have directed hundreds of veterans' funerals, and we have always provided a flag to the family.

The main post office in downtown Riverside has always provided us with flags. A few times it has been running low, because there is a large veterans' presence in Southern California, but it has always come through. The bottom line is that if there are not any free flags, the funeral home needs to buy one and not add it to the bill; they are not that expensive.

– Jeffery J. Killian, Moreno Valley, Calif.

We live in the small town of Macomb, Ill. We have two funeral homes that make sure families are aware of the honor of military rites for departed veterans. Our post office has always had flags on hand, as far back as I can remember.

I just wanted to add a little good news to the article after being so saddened by it.

– Roger Oliver, Macomb, Ill.

Senate filibuster rules

Sen. Patrick Leahy's view on filibuster rules is the opposite of what it was during Robert Bork's confirmation process in 1987 (Big Issues, April). Bork was probably the most qualified Supreme Court nominee of his time, but Leahy – along with almost every other Democrat – used every trick in the book to derail confirmation. The jurists since approved by the Senate are at least as "political" as Bork ever was, if not more. Now, with the shoe on the other foot, Leahy wants to change the rules to suit his political purpose.

– Thomas A. Portante, Pittsburgh

Editor's note: In the article "Never Forgotten" (Rapid Fire, April), the vase on the POW table has a yellow ribbon. The ribbon should be red.

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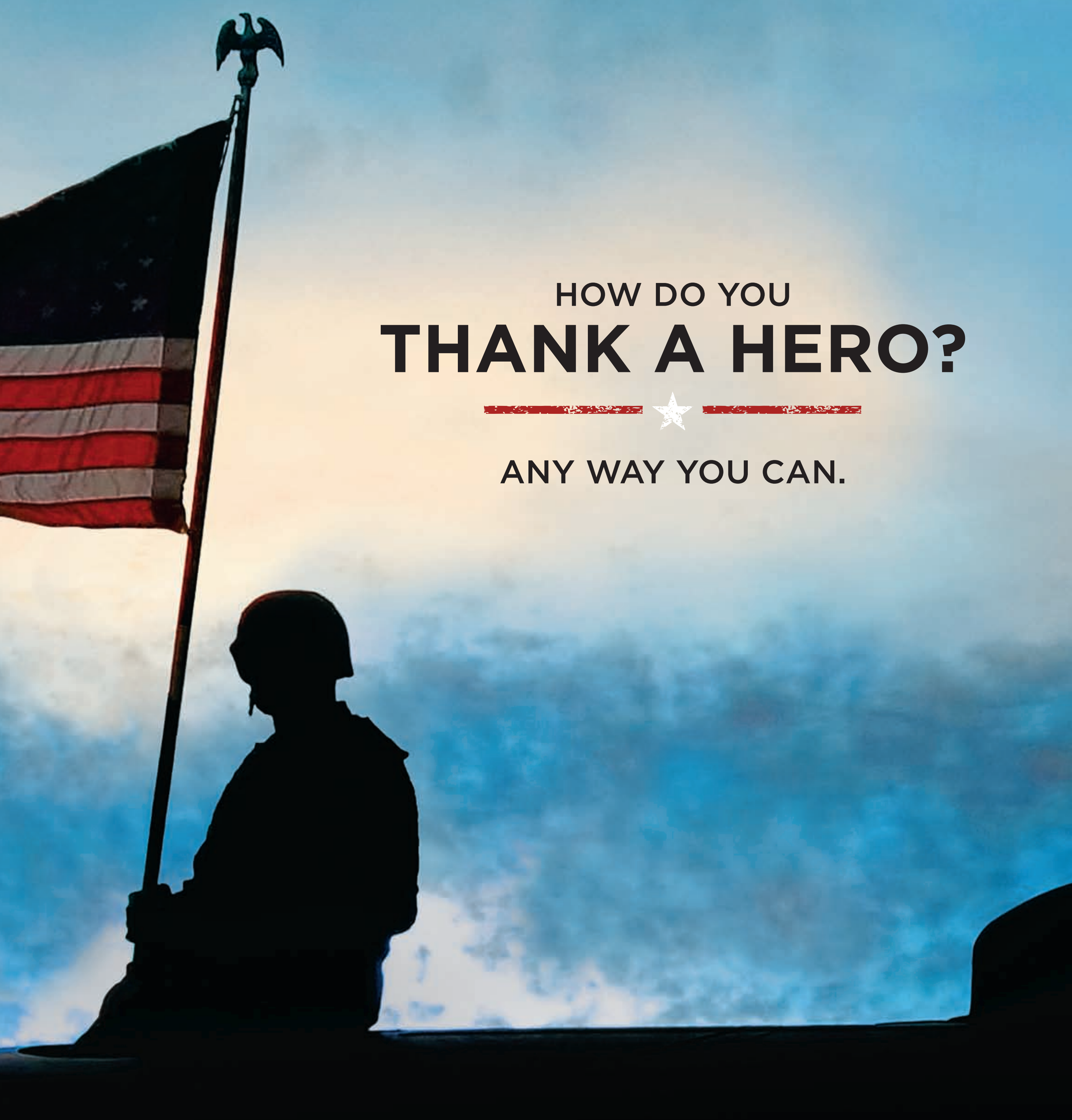
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The flag's meaning to our forefathers

Usually I would find the minutes of a long-adjourned meeting about as exciting as a Swedish furniture-assembly manual. Not so with minutes from the National Flag Conference, which The American Legion led in Washington in 1923. The 323-page transcript reveals a spirit of patriotism that fully captured the reason we honor and respect the meaning of Old Glory.

Appropriately convened on Flag Day, the conference was – to paraphrase our vice president – "a big deal." Representatives of the Legion and 68 other patriotic, fraternal, civic and military organizations gathered at Memorial Continental Hall to draft a code of flag etiquette.

President Warren G. Harding gave the opening address. "I hope you succeed in formulating a code that will be welcomed by all Americans, and that every patriotic and educational society in the republic will commit itself to the endorsement and observance and purpose of the code that you adopt here today," he told the group.

Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, described his union members' feelings: "To us, the American flag means more than even its colors ... It means the leadership of the democratic and humane struggle that has been carried on throughout all the ages. It means a higher development, higher understanding and concept of human lives and progress, and stands as it should stand for everyone, creating a devotion to carry that banner on and on and on and upward to the highest peak of human relationship and democratic institutions."

The consensus among delegates was that most breaches of flag etiquette were unintentional mistakes made by well-meaning patriots. Today, it is more difficult to explain the boneheaded decisions of some individuals regarding our flag. School administrators, backed by a recent court decision, have prohibited students at a California high school from wearing images of the U.S. flag on T-shirts during Cinco de Mayo. While the shirts are not actual flags and do not fall under U.S. Flag Code, the administrators went overboard to avoid offending supporters of the Mexican holiday.

Spinning in his grave over such thinking must be John J. Tigert, the U.S. commissioner of education who spoke at the 1923 conference. "I do not believe that the American people would ridicule other nations as the Germans did when, before this last war, they called us a nation of shopkeepers and the French a nation of degenerates and the English a nation of perfidious people," said Tigert, a World War I veteran. "Of course if you go that far, that kind of nationalism, and if that is what the American flag stands for, then I am not in favor of respecting the American flag. But the American flag never stood for that kind of a thing, and never will ... I do not believe that there is a single thing in our flag that does not stand for honor, justice and righteousness, and there will never come a time when there are not some people in America who will not be willing to stand by the flag ... and to sacrifice for the great principles of righteousness for which the flag stands."

For the majority of us, that is why we pause every June 14 and stand respectfully by this flag of ours, and all it means.

Daniel M. Dellinger

National Commander
Daniel M. Dellinger

MEMORANDA

FLAG ALERT E-NEWSLETTER

The American Legion Flag Alert e-newsletter is sent whenever the president issues a proclamation for the U.S. flag to be flown at half-staff. More than 31,000 subscribers receive updates on the status of our flag. Sign up for the e-newsletter online.

www.legion.org/newsletters

COLOR GUARD, BAND CONTESTS

Color guards and concert bands interested in competing at the 96th National Convention have until July 18 to turn in applications. The color guard contest will be at 5 p.m. Aug. 22, in the Charlotte Convention Center's Hall A, Exhibit Level, with four categories of competition: Military, Military Open, Open, and Advancing/Retiring Colors. All but the first are open to American Legion, Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion or mixed groups. The band contest will begin at 1 p.m. Aug. 23, in Room 203, Ballroom Level. Download contest applications online.

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RICHARD BROWN

Like many young servicemembers, 31-year-old Richard Brown's home and work lives are often a blur.

Still, the Indianapolis man is committed to The American Legion.

"I find being involved in The American Legion is very rewarding, and as such I place a high priority on my involvement," says Brown, an honorary life member of Post 186. "It's tough remaining on active duty in the Army National Guard, being a father to two young children, but without my wife and our support network within our family, it wouldn't be possible to be involved to such a degree."

Brown says he had his busiest but most rewarding Legion year in 2011-2012, when he served as commander of Indiana's 11th District. His accomplishments included helping charter a university veterans post and a prison post, attending nearly 100 recruiting and community events for Post 186, and recruiting 50 new members, which earned him his second Gold Brigade Award. The Department of Indiana named Brown recruiter of the year.

Legionnaires at the post, district and department levels mentored Brown along the way. "They encouraged me to stick with the Legion, to stay involved and to do my best to bring about positive change within The American Legion," he says.

BRANCH OF SERVICE Army National Guard (2001-present)

MOS Human resources technician

RANK Chief warrant officer 2

AMERICAN LEGION POST Post 186, Indianapolis

YEARS IN THE LEGION 11

OFFICES

- Post adjutant (2013-present)
- Post commander (2010-2012)
- District 11 commander (2011-2012)
- District 11 vice commander (2008-2011)
- National American Legion College graduate (2011)
- National American Legion College facilitator (2013)
- National Media & Communications Council member (2013-2014)
- 94th National Convention parade chairman (2012)

Watch an interview with Richard Brown online:
www.legion.org/magazine

Photo by Lucas Carter

INDIANA
AMERICAN LEGION
2013-2014

> *"It's so rewarding giving back to the community, to my fellow veterans and seeing the positive changes that we make in The American Legion."*

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Protect states' rights on fracking

SUPPORT

Rep. Bill Flores, R-Texas

■ Flores serves on the House Budget, Natural Resources and Veterans' Affairs committees.

For the average American family last year, the shale gas revolution meant $1,200 in lower energy bills. During our slow economic recovery, it has been a lone bright spot responsible for creating the most new jobs, in both energy and manufacturing.

America's energy revolution and manufacturing renaissance would not be possible without recent advancements in hydraulic fracturing (HF) technology. But instead of embracing this dramatic growth in domestic shale energy production, the Obama administration has ignored its own experts and directed at least 10 federal agencies to look for ways to override state rules and regulations that already ensure HF is done safely. This is being done despite the fact that states have effectively regulated HF for decades.

To protect U.S. jobs and grow our economy, we must stop the federal government from impeding energy production. There is no demonstrated need to waste taxpayer money by imposing duplicative regulations and adding unnecessary red tape. The only reason federal bureaucrats are getting involved is to appease those who oppose America's transformational energy revolution.

Late last year the House passed my bill, the Protecting States' Rights to Promote American Energy Security Act, with bipartisan support. The bill prohibits the Department of the Interior from enforcing duplicative HF regulations in states with regulations on the books.

The American people want Washington to produce policies that improve people's lives, not ones that impede progress. Allowing states to continue to produce affordable energy in a safe, clean and reliable manner promotes national security, creates jobs and saves taxpayer dollars.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

Last fall, the House of Representatives voted to block federal regulation of hydraulic fracturing in states with their own rules. Critics argue that federal standards are necessary to protect groundwater and other resources.

OPPOSE

Rep. Alan Lowenthal, D-Calif.

■ Lowenthal is a member of the House Natural Resources and Foreign Affairs committees.

Hydraulic fracturing (HF) is a symptom of our entrenched carbon economy. While fracking can bring us a measure of short-term energy independence, where do our children turn in a world of changing climate that requires next-generation energy sources? Natural gas is a temporary bridge to a zero-carbon sustainable energy portfolio that remains the only viable long-term course.

That said, if we are going to frack today, we have to do it in a way that protects communities and the environment, and does not despoil our public lands.

The advantages of large-scale fracking and horizontal drilling are obvious: access to vast reserves of previously untappable petroleum and natural gas, more jobs within the energy industry and increased energy independence. However, the very technique that now makes these resources available has serious negative consequences that cannot be ignored.

Under current regulations, communities across the nation do not have access to reliable or complete information about fracking operations. If the public has the right to know what ingredients are in our food, shouldn't communities have a right to know what chemicals the oil and gas industry are pumping past their drinking water? This is why I proposed legislation last year to require greater transparency and disclosure by fracking companies.

No one can deny that tapping natural resources through HF has been an boon to the oil and gas industry. However, we cannot allow the promise of short-term economic growth to diminish our long-term protection of Americans' health, environment and right to be informed.

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Pass the salt substitute

Low-sodium diets often call for no more than 1,500 mg daily. But salt substitutes aren't for everyone.

Many contain potassium chloride in place of sodium chloride, and potassium consumed in excess may be harmful for some people, the Cleveland Clinic warns. For example, many people with kidney problems are unable to rid their bodies of excessive potassium, endangering their health. Those with kidney problems or who take medication for their hearts, kidneys or livers should check with their doctors before using salt substitutes.

Otherwise, salt substitutes with potassium chloride should be OK in moderation. Those labeled "lite" or "low sodium" may still contain sodium, "just less than what's found in table salt," the clinic adds. These products often have a mix of sodium chloride and potassium chloride, so read the labels.

The best way to avoid salt and salt-substitute problems is to go salt-free. "Instead of mimicking the taste of sodium with salt substitutes, experiment with flavorful herbs and spices," clinic dietitians recommend, including fresh garlic, lemon juice, flavored vinegar, salt-free herb blends, cumin, nutmeg, cinnamon, fresh ground pepper, tarragon and oregano.

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Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

The hidden danger in our eyes

BY MARTIN SAYERS

It is a fact of life that our eyesight deteriorates as we get older, but there is a threat to eye health much more severe than having to wear glasses for reading or driving. Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is a problem for millions of Americans, in varying degrees. Some don't even know it. About 10 percent of people ages 66 to 74 exhibit some symptoms of AMD, with the number increasing to 30 percent in 75- to 85 year-olds.

AMD is not a painful condition – which is why so many people don't realize they're suffering from it – but it can be a severe one. Left unchecked, sufferers may be unable to see anything in the center of their field of sight, as cells in the macula – the small spot in the center of the retina – die, leaving holes in central vision. So you may see someone coming but not be able to discern the face.

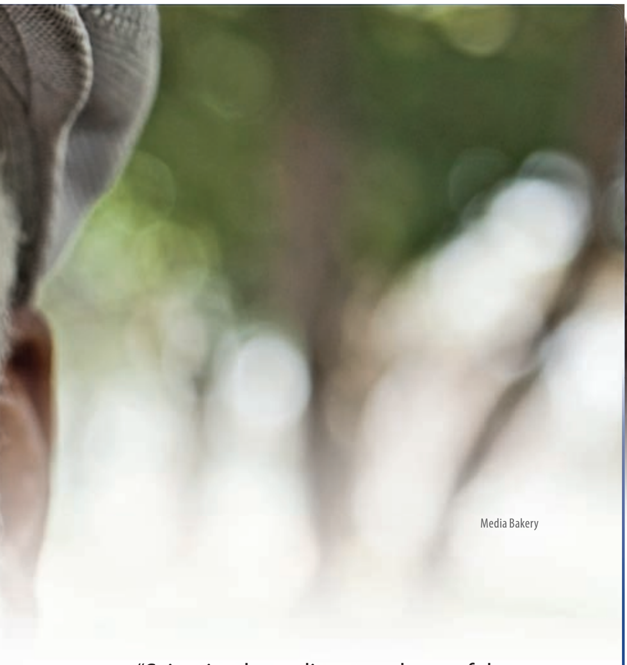
"Dry" AMD refers to the underlying aging process of the macula. Just as the skin wrinkles and thins, sometimes developing aging spots, the macula can age by thinning and with the appearance of aging deposits called drusen. Although there is no known treatment for dry AMD, it usually doesn't severely affect vision.

"Wet" AMD is the eye's response to this aging process. In some people with dry AMD, the eye senses a need to repair or strengthen the thinning macula with scarring. As with the skin, fluid and sometimes even some bleeding occurs in the macula. Wet AMD tends to progress more rapidly, and if left untreated may have a profound effect on central vision.

Fortunately, wet AMD can be treated, says eye expert Andrew Eller, professor of ophthalmology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

Six warning signs of macular degeneration

- **Blurred vision**
- **Difficulty discerning between colors**
- **Needing brighter light than normal when reading**
- **Difficulty recognizing people's faces**
- **Blind spots in the middle of your field of vision**
- **Straight lines appearing wavy or crooked**



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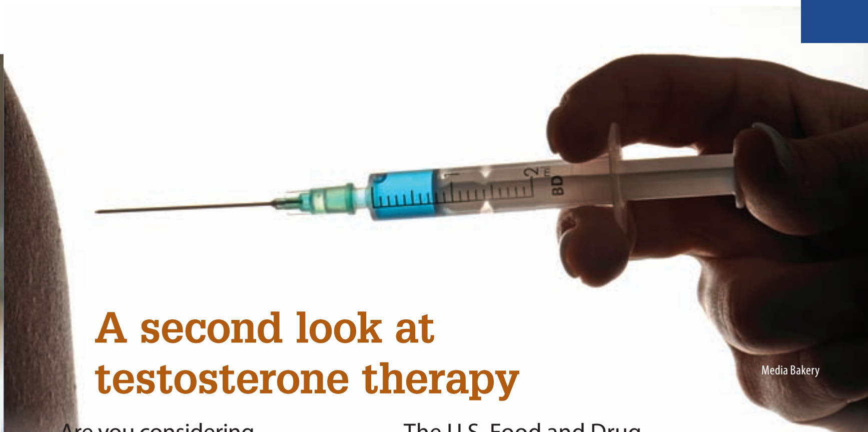
"Scientists have discovered one of the major chemicals or 'growth factors' that tell the body when to grow a scar, whether it is in the skin or the eye," he says. "Once this major growth factor was discovered, it allowed scientists to create a medication that can block or disrupt its action. These medications must be injected into the eye, which admittedly sounds awful and painful. However, the eye can be properly numbed, and the medicine can be administered safely and without undue stress or discomfort."

How do you get AMD in the first place? Age is obviously the prime cause, while a history of the condition in the family means you are more at risk, and factors such as obesity, smoking, high cholesterol and high blood pressure may all contribute.

However, could our ever-increasing exposure to electronic devices such as computer screens, cellphones and TV be making the problem worse? According to Eller, this is not a problem: "The eye is a camera," he explains. "If we take too many pictures, we will not damage the camera, but we may develop some fatigue in our trigger finger. This is equivalent to the eye strain we may get from spending too many hours looking at the computer, but we cannot physically damage our eyes."

Martin Sayers is a freelance writer living in Cambridge, England. He specializes in health and nutrition issues.



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A second look at testosterone therapy

Are you considering testosterone therapy to boost your energy and your sex drive? Proceed with caution.

That's the advice of Carl Pallais, an endocrinologist and assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, writing in *Harvard Men's Health Watch*.

The number of American men using a prescription testosterone gel or injection to restore normal levels of this hormone is increasing. But so is evidence that men who take testosterone supplements may be putting themselves at increased risk for a heart attack and heart disease.

Two recent analyses and one randomized trial supported by VA and the National Institutes of Health found a higher rate of cardiovascular events in men who received testosterone and had pre-existing heart problems.

Pallais and the Endocrine Society are calling for a large-scale study that would follow a group of men using testosterone therapy over a period of years. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has announced plans to evaluate its safety.

Meanwhile, Pallais has some recommendations for men considering hormone therapy:

- Be sure that the cause of fatigue and low sex drive is low testosterone. It could be depression, relationship problems, or the lack of a balanced diet, regular exercise and good sleep.
- Be mindful of who is at greater risk, including men at high risk for prostate cancer, those with severe urinary symptoms from prostate enlargement, those who have had heart attacks, and those diagnosed with heart disease or who have multiple risk factors for heart disease.
- Be sure your diagnosis is correct. The best time to measure testosterone levels is between 7 and 10 a.m.
- Follow up with tests and doctor visits while undergoing therapy to be sure it is not causing new health problems.

Canker-sore relief

According to *U.S. News & World Report* and *Pharmacy Times*, these are pharmacists' recommendations for canker-sore treatments, by percentage:

Orajel	**18**	**Anbesol**	**13**
Orabase	**16**	**Gly-Oxide**	**13**
Herpecin L	**14**		

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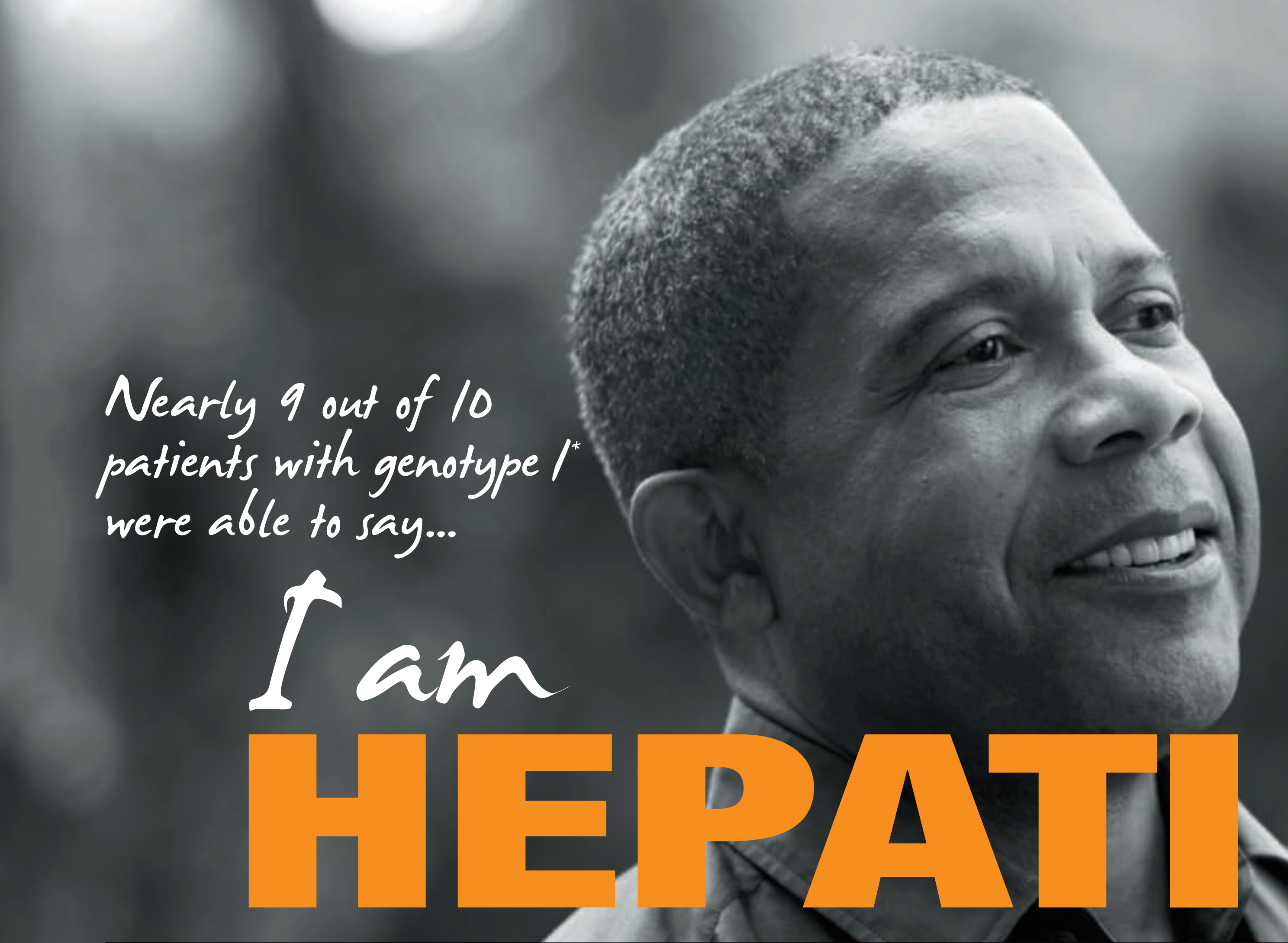

Important Safety Information

What is the most important information I should know about SOVALDI?

SOVALDI combination therapy with ribavirin or peginterferon alfa and ribavirin can cause birth defects or death of your unborn baby. If you or your sexual partner is pregnant or plans to become pregnant, do not take these medicines.

- You and your sexual partner must use 2 effective forms of birth control and should not become pregnant while being treated with SOVALDI combination therapy and for 6 months after your treatment is over. Talk to your doctor about forms of birth control.
- If you or your partner can become pregnant you must have a pregnancy test before starting treatment with SOVALDI combination therapy, every month while being treated, and for 6 months after your treatment ends.
- Tell your healthcare provider right away if a pregnancy occurs while taking or within 6 months after you stop taking SOVALDI combination therapy. You or your healthcare provider should contact the Ribavirin Pregnancy Registry. If you are also infected with HIV and taking medicines to treat your HIV infection, an Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry is also available. For contact information, see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information.

You should not take SOVALDI alone. SOVALDI should be used together with ribavirin or in combination with peginterferon alfa and ribavirin to treat chronic Hep C infection.

***In a study of 327 patients who had no prior Hep C treatments, 89% of those with genotype 1 were cured. All patients received SOVALDI once daily for 12 weeks along with another oral medicine (ribavirin) and weekly injections (peginterferon alfa).**

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information on the following page.

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Changing Hep C with a groundbreaking treatment called SOVALDI.®

SOVALDI is a prescription medicine used with other antiviral medicines to treat chronic (lasting a long time) hepatitis C (Hep C) infection in adults. SOVALDI should not be taken alone. It is not known if SOVALDI is safe and effective in children under 18 years of age.

For the most common type of Hep C (genotype 1), SOVALDI is designed and proven to work quickly with just 12 weeks of treatment in combination with other prescription medicines. One SOVALDI pill is taken once daily, along with another oral medicine and a weekly injection.

In a clinical study nearly 9 out of 10 patients were cured.* All patients received SOVALDI once daily for 12 weeks along with another oral medicine (ribavirin) and weekly injections (peginterferon alfa).

Cure means the Hep C virus is not detected in the blood when measured 3 months after treatment is completed.

They're calling this Hep C treatment a breakthrough. They got that right. Imagine being Hep C free after just 12 weeks of treatment.

Don't wait for your liver disease to progress. Talk to your gastroenterologist today and visit sovaldi.com or call 844-4-SOVALDI.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking SOVALDI?

- If you have: liver problems other than hepatitis C infection; had a liver transplant; severe kidney problems or are on dialysis; HIV; any other medical condition; or if you are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. You and your healthcare provider should decide if you will take SOVALDI or breastfeed. You should not do both.
- If you take rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®), St. John's wort or a product that contains St. John's wort. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Other medicines may affect how SOVALDI works.

What are the most common side effects of SOVALDI?

For SOVALDI used in combination with peginterferon alfa and ribavirin they include tiredness, headache, nausea, difficulty sleeping, and low red blood cell count.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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What is the most important information I should know about SOVALDI?
SOVALDI, in combination with ribavirin or peginterferon alfa and ribavirin, may cause birth defects or death of your unborn baby. If you are pregnant or your sexual partner is pregnant or plans to become pregnant, do not take these medicines. You or your sexual partner should not become pregnant while taking SOVALDI with ribavirin or in combination with peginterferon alfa and ribavirin, and for 6 months after treatment is over.

- **Females and males must use 2 effective forms of birth control during treatment and for the 6 months after treatment with SOVALDI and ribavirin or in combination with peginterferon alfa and ribavirin.** Talk to your healthcare provider about forms of birth control that may be used during this time.
- Females must have a negative pregnancy test before starting treatment with SOVALDI and ribavirin or in combination with peginterferon alfa and ribavirin, every month while being treated, and for 6 months after your treatment ends.
- If you or your female sexual partner becomes pregnant while taking or within 6 months after you stop taking SOVALDI and ribavirin, or SOVALDI in combination with peginterferon alfa and ribavirin, tell your healthcare provider right away. You or your healthcare provider should contact the Ribavirin Pregnancy Registry by calling 1-800-593-2214. The Ribavirin Pregnancy Registry collects information about what happens to mothers and their babies if the mother takes ribavirin while she is pregnant. If you are also infected with HIV and taking medicines to treat your HIV infection, an Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry is also available at 1-800-258-4263.

You should not take SOVALDI alone. SOVALDI should be used together with ribavirin or in combination with peginterferon alfa and ribavirin to treat chronic hepatitis C infection.

What is SOVALDI?
SOVALDI is a prescription medicine used with other antiviral medicines to treat chronic (lasting a long time) hepatitis C infection in adults. SOVALDI should not be taken alone. It is not known if SOVALDI is safe and effective in children under 18 years of age.

Who should not take SOVALDI? See **"What is the most important information I should know about SOVALDI?"**
What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking SOVALDI? Before taking SOVALDI, tell your healthcare provider if you:

- have liver problems other than hepatitis C infection
- have had a liver transplant
- have severe kidney problems or you are on dialysis
- have HIV
- have any other medical condition
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if SOVALDI passes into your breast milk. You and your healthcare provider should decide if you will take SOVALDI or breastfeed. You should not do both.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Other medicines may affect how SOVALDI works. **Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:**

- carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Epitol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®)
- oxcarbazepine (Trileptal®, Oxtellar XR™)
- phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
- phenobarbital (Luminal®)
- rifabutin (Mycobutin®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- rifapentine (Priftin®)
- St. John's wort (Hypericum perforatum) or a product that contains St. John's wort
- tipranavir (Aptivus®)

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

How should I take SOVALDI?

- Take SOVALDI exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to take it. Do not change your dose unless your healthcare provider tells you to.
- Do not stop taking SOVALDI without first talking with your healthcare provider. If you think there is a reason to stop taking SOVALDI, talk to your healthcare provider before doing so.
- Take SOVALDI 1 time each day with or without food.
- If you miss a dose of SOVALDI, take the missed dose as soon as you remember the same day. Do not take more than 1 tablet (400 mg) of SOVALDI in a day. Take your next dose of SOVALDI at your regular time the next day.
- If you take too much SOVALDI, call your healthcare provider or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

What are the possible side effects of SOVALDI?
See **"What is the most important information I should know about SOVALDI?"**
The most common side effects of SOVALDI when used in combination with ribavirin include:

- tiredness
- headache

The most common side effects of SOVALDI when used in combination with peginterferon alfa and ribavirin include:

- tiredness
- headache
- nausea
- difficulty sleeping
- low red blood cell count

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.
These are not all the possible side effects of SOVALDI. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

Keep SOVALDI and all medicines out of the reach of children.
General information about the safe and effective use of SOVALDI
It is not known if treatment with SOVALDI will prevent you from infecting another person with the hepatitis C virus during treatment. Talk with your healthcare provider about ways to prevent spreading the hepatitis C virus.
Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use SOVALDI for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give SOVALDI to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.
If you would like more information about SOVALDI, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about SOVALDI that is written for health professionals.
For more information, call 1-800-445-3235 or go to www.SOVALDI.com.

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Army, Guard spar over restructure

BY TOM PHILPOTT

Gen. Raymond Odierno, the Army's chief of staff, called the dispute a mere "family spat" over resources in an era of tightening budgets.

Army Gen. Frank Grass, chief of the National Guard Bureau, suggests that a lot more is at stake. But he's preparing to execute the plan as ordered – unless Congress intervenes.

The two members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff aired their differences over the Army's plan to restructure at an unusual April hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The plan is part of the Army's fiscal 2015 defense budget request. The most controversial piece is its Aviation Restructure Initiative (ARI), which would transfer all 192 National Guard Apache attack helicopters to the active Army, allowing the retirement of obsolete Kiowa Warrior scout helicopters. In return, the Guard would get 111 newer Black Hawk utility helicopters.

An AH-64 Apache attack helicopter prepares to take off from Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. DoD

Black Hawks are primarily transport helicopters, as useful for delivering supplies and evacuating victims of natural disasters as they are for evacuating wounded and transporting troops in war.

The missile-and-rocket-laden Apache, however, is an asset the Guard doesn't want to lose given its more prominent combat role. And hundreds of pilots would have to retrain or leave service.

Even before the hearing, Grass' opposition to the aviation plan and proposed force cuts was shared by many state governors and adjutants general.

Army leaders say tighter budgets require downsizing aviation assets, and Apaches will be kept at a higher state of readiness as active units. Also, with more intense training possible, the Apache "E" with the Modernized Target Acquisition Designation system will be teamed with unmanned aerial systems to enhance armed aerial scout capabilities.

Odierno explained that the active force would be absorbing a disproportionately larger cut in total strength and in aviation assets "to maintain the proper balance between end strength, readiness and modernization across the total Army."

He said the Budget Control Act of 2011 mandates that the Army get a lot smaller. By October 2017, active strength will fall to 450,000, or 20 percent below its wartime peak of 569,000. Guard strength will be 335,000, 6 percent below its wartime high of 354,000. The Army Reserve will be 195,000, or 10 percent off its peak of 205,000.

Below those levels, the Army can't meet strategy requirements. But these figures assume that Congress will restore $115 billion in budget sequestration cuts set to occur from fiscal 2016 through 2019. If it fails to do so, Army active strength will fall by an additional 30,000, Guard by 20,000 and the Army Reserve by 10,000.

Odierno rejected criticism that the restructure is a step toward returning the Guard to "strategic reserve" status after years as an operational force integral to missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But in defending the restructure, Odierno was forced to highlight the relative readiness of active vs. Guard units, noting how active units, co-located with air and ground ranges, can train daily and "sustain a significantly higher readiness state."

"With mobilization time, with post-mobilization training, the National Guard can provide us with those capabilities," he said. "But it is not the same capability. They are not interchangeable. They are complementary."

Asked to react, Grass said he had made three trips overseas, "and every time (I) hear the same thing: the commanders on the ground tell me they can't tell the difference."

Odierno appeared to win the debate. But several senators vowed to block any cut or shift in assets until a special commission reviews the restructure.

Grass supported that idea. Odierno said it was unnecessary and could deepen the Army's readiness crisis by delaying needed force realignments for up to two years, denying the Army $2 billion in budget savings that could begin to restore declines in training and force readiness.

Tom Philpott has covered military personnel and veterans issues for more than 30 years.

Analysts square off on the shifting balance of American governance.

A QUESTION

The United States is at grave risk of embracing an imperial presidency.

BY JONATHAN TURLEY

When James Madison shaped a new constitutional system for the United States, he and his fellow framers had one overriding fear: tyranny.

They wanted to divide power between three branches and create lines of separation that prevented the concentration of power in any single branch. The framers based their ideas on an understanding of human nature – and human weakness. They tried to create a system in which ambition would check ambition. However, they knew that citizens can be distracted or deceived into giving up their very freedom. Madison warned future generations that "if Tyranny and Oppression come to this land, it will be in the guise of fighting a foreign enemy." The framers knew how effective fear can be to induce citizens to give up their liberties. Recent years have proven them once again prophetic in their warnings.

To this day, many Americans misunderstand the separation of powers as simply a division of authority between three branches of government. In fact, it was intended as a protection not of institutional but of individual rights, by preventing any branch from assuming enough power to become tyrannical. No branch is supposed to have enough power to govern alone. Once power becomes concentrated in the hands of a president, citizens are left only with the assurance that such unchecked power will be used wisely – a Faustian bargain the framers repeatedly warned us never to accept. Benjamin Franklin said it best when he warned that "they who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety."

Despite these warnings, many people have embraced largely unchecked presidential powers under the assurance that the rising security state will keep them safe. The shift of power to

See **TURLEY** *on page* **22**

OF POWER

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Contemporary challenges and a demanding public require a robust presidency.

BY WILLIAM HOWELL

Depending on the day and audience, President Barack Obama has been called many things, only some of which are fit to print: Wall Street stooge, Main Street sellout, foreign policy novice, socialist. One consistent strain of criticism, however, draws on the theme of executive overreach or, less politely, tyranny. And it is this line of criticism I want to explore here, if only to sketch out a limited defense of Obama's repeated efforts to exercise power in a system of government that does so much to privilege the status quo.

After spending much of his first term in office courting Republican support within Congress, Obama has consigned himself during his second term to some basic facts about contemporary politics: legislative support resides nearly exclusively among co-partisans; rather than softening partisan cleavages, soaring rhetoric about transformational politics will do as much to harden opposition; and the most prevalent opportunities for advancing policy change come not from working with Congress but from working around it.

It comes as little surprise, then, that Obama is fashioning a policy record made of executive orders and other unilateral directives that, by turn, increase the minimum wage for employees of federal contractors, alter overtime pay requirements for workers nationwide, strengthen the oversight of gun purchases, expand environmental regulations, reconfigure domestic and international spying practices, initiate strikes against suspected terrorists abroad, draw down the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan and much more. As announced in his State of the Union speech earlier this year, Obama would no longer wait for Congress to legislate on pressing domestic and international policy matters. Consciously eschewing the "stale political arguments" and

See **HOWELL** *on page* **28**

TURLEY *continued from page* **20**

the presidency certainly did not start with President Barack Obama. To the contrary, this trend has been gaining ground for decades. But it has accelerated under Obama, who has succeeded to a degree that would have made Richard Nixon blush. Indeed, Obama may be the president Nixon always wanted to be.

I do not believe that Obama is (or wants to be) a tyrant. However, his unilateral actions are redrawing the lines of separation in our system in a way that I believe could prove destabilizing and even dangerous in the future.

While the "imperial presidency" has been discussed as a danger in our country since its founding, it is a term most associated with Nixon. Presidents such as Andrew Jackson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt showed similar tendencies. Often, war is cited as the reason for extraconstitutional action, such as Abraham Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus. "Imperial presidency" is not a term that reflects an actual royal ambition or the suspension of term limits. Rather, it refers to a model of the presidency that allows for a wide array of unilateral actions and largely unchecked powers.

What is fascinating is that Nixon was largely unsuccessful in accomplishing this dream of a presidency with robust and largely unlimited powers. Indeed, many of the unchecked powers claimed by Nixon became the basis for articles in his impeachment and led to his resignation on Aug. 9, 1974.

Four decades ago, Nixon was halted in his determined effort to create an imperial presidency with unilateral powers and privileges. But in 2013, Obama wields those very same powers openly and without serious opposition.

- *Surveillance.* Nixon's use of warrantless surveillance was cited as one of his greatest abuses and led to the creation of the special Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. Obama, however, has expanded warrantless surveillance programs to a degree that dwarfs anything Nixon imagined, including initiating a program that captured communications of virtually every U.S. citizen.

While many hail Obama for not taking "no" for an answer from Congress in areas such as health care and immigration reform, they may rue the day another president uses the same powers to negate environmental or anti-discrimination laws.

- *War.* Nixon's impeachment included the charge that he evaded Congress' sole authority to declare war by invading Cambodia. Obama went even further in the Libyan war, declaring that he alone defines what is a "war" for the purposes of triggering the constitutional provisions on declarations of Congress. That position effectively converts the entire provision in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution ("Congress shall have power to … declare War") into a discretionary power of the president.
- *Kill lists.* Nixon ordered a burglary to find evidence to use against Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked the Pentagon Papers, and was accused of a secret plot to have the White House "plumbers" "incapacitate" him in a physical attack. People were outraged. Yet Obama has asserted the right to kill any U.S. citizen without a charge, let alone conviction, based on his sole authority. Internal documents state that he has a right to kill a citizen even when he lacks "clear evidence (of) a specific attack" being planned.
- *Reporters/whistle-blowers.* Nixon was known for his attacks on whistleblowers, using the Espionage Act of 1917 to bring a rare criminal case against Ellsberg. He was vilified for this abuse of the law, but Obama has brought twice as many such prosecutions as all prior presidents combined. Nixon was accused of putting a few reporters under surveillance. The Obama administration has admitted to putting Associated Press reporters, as well as a Fox reporter, under surveillance.
- *Obstruction of Congress.* Nixon was cited for various efforts to obstruct or mislead congressional investigators. The Obama administration has repeatedly refused to give evidence sought by oversight committees in a variety of scandals. In one case, Congress voted to move forward with criminal contempt charges against Attorney General Eric Holder, which Holder's own Justice Department blocked. In another case, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper lied before Congress on the surveillance programs, and later said that he offered the least untruthful statement he could think of. The Obama administration, however, refuses to investigate Clapper for perjury, let alone fire him. Recently, the administration was accused of searching Senate computers in an investigation of the CIA and trying to intimidate congressional investigators.

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These examples are simply those connected with the growing internal security state. Other characteristics of an imperial presidency are equally evident, particularly in the repeated circumvention of Congress in ordering unilateral changes to federal law or suspending federal laws.

While many hail Obama for not taking "no" for an answer from Congress in areas such as health care and immigration reform, they may rue the day another president uses the same powers to negate environmental or anti-discrimination laws.

It has long been said that one of the scariest statements is, "Trust us, we're from the government." The deep American distrust for such a claim was shared by the framers, who rejected a government based on assurances of the best intentions. Madison famously warned, "If men were angels, no government would be necessary." In other words, we have a government that refuses to accept promises of good behavior or motivations from politicians.

Time and time again, Obama has returned to the theme that there is nothing to worry about in surveillance or wars or even the killing of citizens because he promises to use the powers wisely. The administration has been particularly adept in creating internal "committees" to suggest some form of due process before citizens are vaporized or other unchecked powers are used by the president. Since the president creates these committees and appoints their members out of his own authority, he can simply ignore their recommendations. It is little more than the promise of best intentions – the very promise the framers warned us never to accept from our government.

In the end, we have accepted the lure of personality over principle in allowing the expansion of these powers. Obama will not be our last president, but these powers are unlikely to be voluntarily surrendered by his successors. There is a radical change occurring in our system, and we may be at a critical constitutional tipping point in the establishment of an imperial presidency in the coming years.

The danger of this concentration of authority is made more acute by the failure of federal courts to perform their vital function in confining the branches to their constitutional spaces. Federal courts in the past few decades have maintained an increasing position of avoidance in separation-of-powers cases, leaving it to the political branches to fight over turf. Courts now routinely block litigants, including members of Congress, from even being heard on constitutional violations. Years ago, I represented Democratic and Republican members (both conservative and liberal) challenging the Libyan war. They were denied even a hearing.

Under this approach, Congress is being reduced to an almost decorative element in governance – free to approve but not to block presidential demands.

Congress has proved equally passive, if not inert. Democrats have remained silent in the face of policies that challenge core values of privacy and war, as did Republicans under George W. Bush. That interbranch tension envisioned by Madison has gradually dissipated. Individual ambition of politicians has replaced institutional ambition, leaving many to curry favor with the White House as legislative powers are drained away by an increasingly powerful president. As that power increases, there is more pressure on politicians to yield in new areas.

This downward spiral may have reached its ultimate expression this year. Framers such as Madison would have been mortified by the scene from the most recent State of the Union address. Obama appeared before a joint session of Congress (and members of the Supreme Court) to announce that he intended to go it alone in achieving his policy goals, refusing to yield to the actions of Congress. One would have expected an outcry, or at least stony silence, from a branch that was being told it would be circumvented. Instead, there was rapturous applause that bordered on a collective expression of institutional self-loathing.

Obama has made it clear that he simply will not take "no" for an answer. When Congress recently refused to pass the DREAM Act to change immigration laws to protect potentially millions of deportable individuals, he simply ordered the very same measures on his own authority. The same unilateral measures were ordered in health care, drug enforcement, online gambling and other areas. The failure of Congress to consent to executive demands was followed by the same measures being ordered on the basis of Obama's inherent authority. Under this approach, Congress is being reduced to an almost decorative element in governance – free to approve but not to block presidential demands.

While Congress clearly retains powers, its members are increasingly finding that

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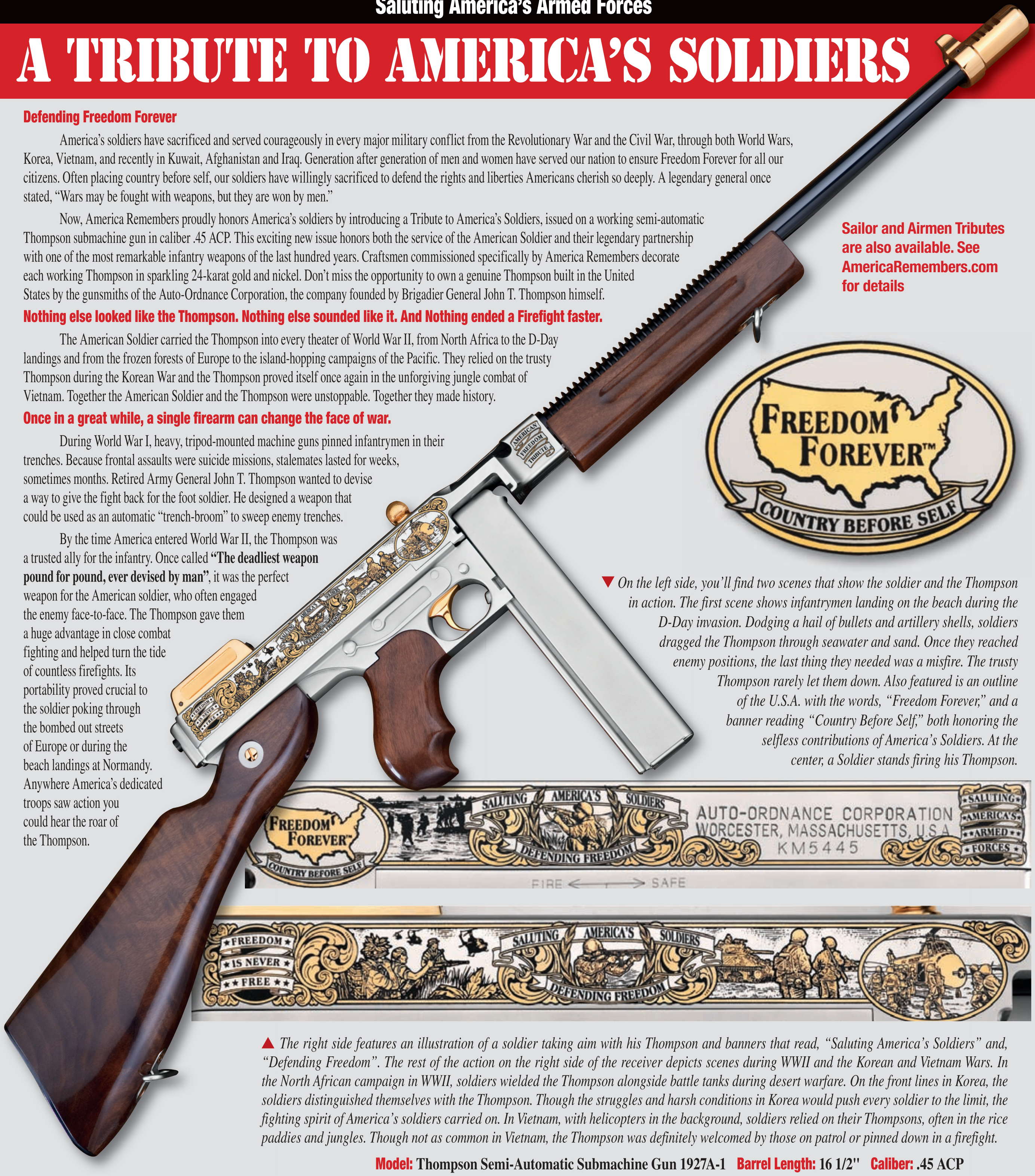

▼ *On the left side, you'll find two scenes that show the soldier and the Thompson in action. The first scene shows infantrymen landing on the beach during the D-Day invasion. Dodging a hail of bullets and artillery shells, soldiers dragged the Thompson through seawater and sand. Once they reached enemy positions, the last thing they needed was a misfire. The trusty Thompson rarely let them down. Also featured is an outline of the U.S.A. with the words, "Freedom Forever," and a banner reading "Country Before Self," both honoring the selfless contributions of America's Soldiers. At the center, a Soldier stands firing his Thompson.*

▲ *The right side features an illustration of a soldier taking aim with his Thompson and banners that read, "Saluting America's Soldiers" and, "Defending Freedom". The rest of the action on the right side of the receiver depicts scenes during WWII and the Korean and Vietnam Wars. In the North African campaign in WWII, soldiers wielded the Thompson alongside battle tanks during desert warfare. On the front lines in Korea, the soldiers distinguished themselves with the Thompson. Though the struggles and harsh conditions in Korea would push every soldier to the limit, the fighting spirit of America's soldiers carried on. In Vietnam, with helicopters in the background, soldiers relied on their Thompsons, often in the rice paddies and jungles. Though not as common in Vietnam, the Thompson was definitely welcomed by those on patrol or pinned down in a firefight.*

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discretionary funds and powers blunt efforts to change government programs. Even Congress' power of the purse has become discretionary with the president. When Congress resisted demands of the president on health care, Obama simply shifted $454 million in funds from the purpose mandated by Congress to his own purpose. When he decided not to consult with Congress on the Libyan war, he simply spent roughly a billion dollars on a war neither declared nor funded by Congress.

Such circumvention – and the new presidential powers – create a perfect storm within the Madisonian system. It raises the very prospect the framers thought they blocked through the separation of powers: a president who can effectively rule alone.

We often refer to ourselves as the "land of the free," as if that status were self-evident. We rarely ask ourselves what those freedoms are and how they have been abridged. Our self-image can border on self-delusion when we take stock of the status of many rights.

We have learned of a massive surveillance program in which every citizen has had telephonic and email data captured by the government. Every citizen has been warned that the president may kill them on his own authority without a charge, let alone a conviction. We have a secret court that approves thousands of secret searches every year and a federal court system that increasingly allows the use of secret evidence. We have a new Obama-era law, the National Defense Authorization Act, that allows for the indefinite detention of people by the government and, while exempted from mandatory detention, allows for such detention of citizens. We still have a detention center at Guantanamo Bay, established by George W. Bush, just over our border to avoid the jurisdiction of U.S. courts. It allows the president to choose who gets a real trial, who gets a legally dubious military tribunal, or who gets no trial at all. While seeking to close the facility, Obama has continued to assert the right to send people to military tribunals on his sole authority – thereby stripping them of core legal protections.

While the erosion of freedoms in the United States has occurred with nary a whimper of regret in this country, it has not gone unnoticed abroad. The United States is now widely viewed as a hypocrite on the subject of human rights and civil liberties. This year, our nation fell to 46th in the world on press freedoms (behind the former Soviet republics of Lithuania and Latvia as well as Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Ghana, South Africa and El Salvador), according to a recent study by Reporters Without Borders. Another study this year counts the United States as an "enemy of Internet freedom" with countries such as Iran, China and North Korea.

It may be that it is not the presidency that has changed. We have changed.

When the full mosaic of new governmental powers is considered, and the full array of rights curtailed in the United States, we are left with a disturbing question of self-identity. We more often seem to define ourselves by what we are not than by what we are.

In the summer of 1787, a telling moment occurred after a crowd gathered around Independence Hall to learn what type of government had been created for the new nation. When Benjamin Franklin walked out of the Constitutional Convention, Elizabeth Powel could wait no longer. Franklin was one of the best known of the framers working on the new U.S. Constitution. Powel ran up to Franklin and asked, "Well, Doctor, what have we got, a republic or a monarchy?" Franklin turned to her and said what are perhaps the most chilling words uttered by any framer: "A republic, Madam, if you can keep it."

It may be that it is not the presidency that has changed. We have changed. As a nation, we seem to have grown almost bored with rights like privacy and due process. We have been passive and pedestrian in watching the rise of an uber-presidency. We no longer view ourselves as directing our government, but as merely bystanders watching matters outside our control.

Worse yet, we seem to have lost not just our identity but even our interest in governance. It was a republic when Franklin was stopped by Powel. I am not sure that most citizens today would even have stopped him to ask. "Democracy ... soon wastes, exhausts and murders itself," John Adams once said. "There was never a democracy yet that did not commit suicide."

What is truly sad is that if one of the greatest republics in history did die, it is not clear if anyone would even notice its passing.

Jonathan Turley is the Shapiro Professor of Public Interest Law at George Washington University and frequently appears before Congress as a witness on constitutional issues. He is the host of ***www.jonathanturley.org****, an award-winning legal and policy blog.*

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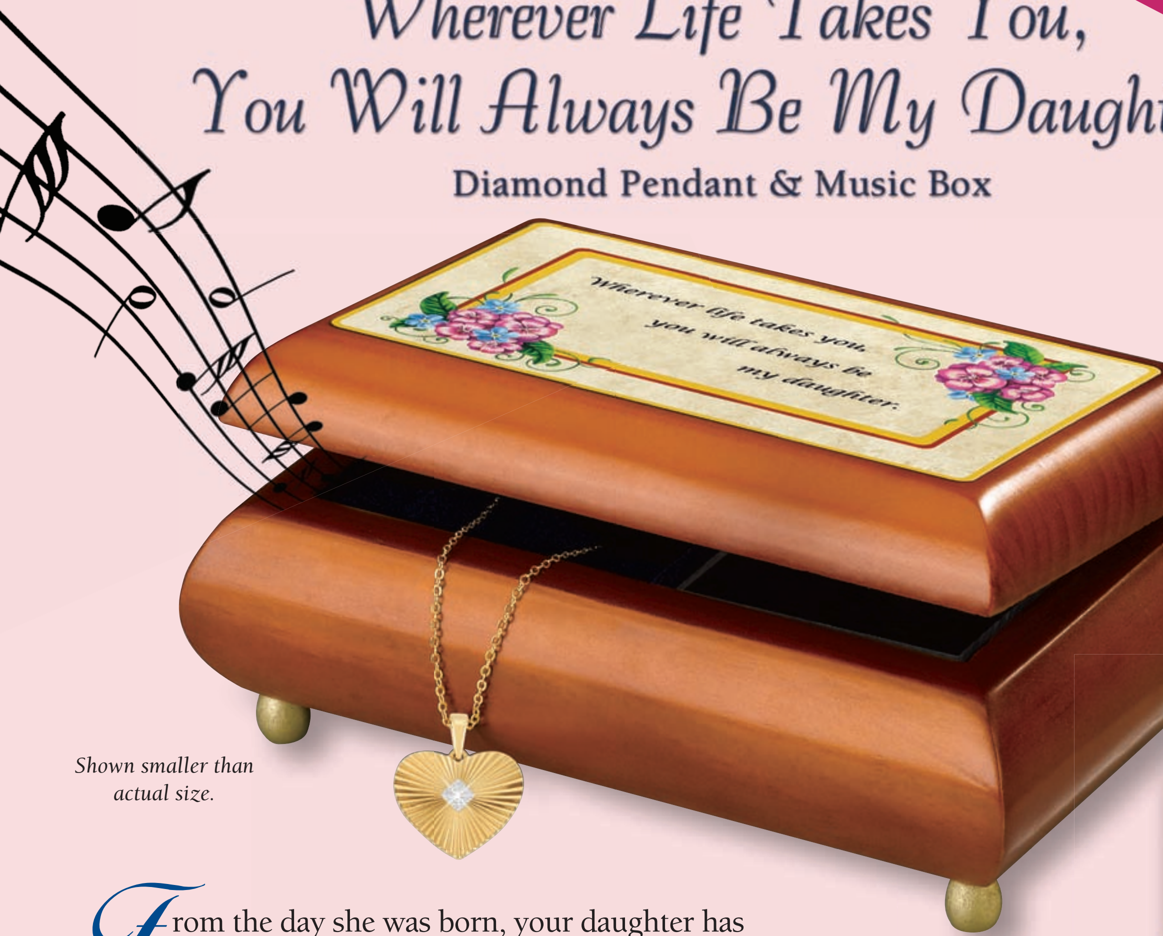

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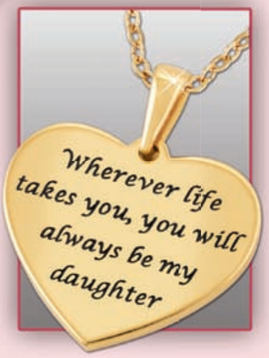

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HOWELL *continued from page* **21**

"gridlock" that pervade Washington, the president repeatedly signaled his intention to act on his own.

Before he even finished speaking, Republicans began casting Obama as a grave threat to the constitutional order. On the morning of the speech, Sen. Ted Cruz, a Republican from Texas and darling of the Tea Party movement, took to the pages of *The Wall Street Journal* to accuse the president of "(disregarding) the written law." Cruz declared that the "pattern of lawlessness" exhibited by the Obama administration threatened to transform America from a nation ruled by law to one ruled by men. And not just any group of men, but one man: Obama.

Cruz was not the only Republican to take issue with Obama's embrace of executive power. Rep. Randy Weber of Texas tweeted from the floor of the speech that Obama was a "socialist dictator." The next day, former Republican Pennsylvania senator and past presidential candidate Rick Santorum said that Obama's speech was "what tyrants are made of." Conservative pundits enthusiastically concurred. The so-called imperial presidency, which had once so frightened Democrats, now stood in full view of Republicans.

Much of this talk, to be sure, can be chalked up to the everyday posturing of contemporary politics, which are long on magniloquence and short on reason. For as sure as politicians will pander to our baser instincts, Republicans and Democrats will each whip up a thick froth of indignation over what they perceive as gross abuses of the Constitution wrought by a sitting president of the opposite party. Though Republicans may be the ones making hay today, under the George W. Bush administration Democrats read abuse into nearly every exercise of presidential power.

The partisan undertones of these arguments may not be intellectually serious, but that does not mean the arguments themselves do not warrant serious intellectual consideration. The American presidency, like our system of checks and powers more generally, remains very much a work in progress. The precise meaning of "executive power" has always been contested. To make sense of our politics and the president's role within them, then, we would do well to look upon them if not from 30,000 feet, then at least above the cacophony of today's headlines. And when we do, some basic patterns emerge that clarify why presidents behave as they do – and how we, the American public, are complicit in the matter.

If not an empty cupboard, Article II of the Constitution offers a rather paltry food supply to a president seeking sustenance in today's politics.

Two facts go a long distance toward explaining the president's relationship with – and persistent longing for – power. The first points to the Constitution. The second implicates Americans themselves.

If not an empty cupboard, Article II of the Constitution offers a rather paltry food supply to a president seeking sustenance in today's politics. Formally, the president can veto legislation, although his veto is subject to congressional override. He can appoint bureaucrats and judges, although these powers too are subject to the Senate's advice and consent. He can receive foreign dignitaries, a power that was largely ceremonial in conception. And he is the commander in chief, a position that was primarily administrative.

When it comes to unambiguous conferrals of influence, that is about it. The founders may have created a system of separated branches, each independent of the others. Such branches, however, were decidedly not coequal. To the contrary, Congress was understood to be the first branch of government, and many of the powers granted to the president – e.g., the veto – were meant to guard against legislative encroachment.

On their own, these basic facts about the Constitution are not especially problematic. The trouble emerges when the spindly Article II sits as backdrop against the extraordinary demands and expectations the American people place upon their presidents. These demands and expectations, to be sure, have evolved over time. Nearly all the trend lines, though, point upward and outward, so that today it is difficult to even conceive of a subject of legitimate government action on which the president can punt.

We expect our presidents to assign meaning to our tragedies, direct water to our droughts, stand up to Russian aggression while ensuring the sanctity of international markets, contain terrorist threats while preserving our civil liberties, advance tough standards of accountability in our schools, reduce our crime, allay the ravages of urban poverty and so much more besides. There simply is no dimension of public life about which the president can claim neither an opinion nor responsibility.

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Given the standards to which we hold presidents and the inadequacy of the enumerated powers granted them, it should not come as a great surprise that presidents – all presidents – work doggedly to preserve what statutory authority is delegated to them, read broadly into the vague constitutional provisions, manufacture new tools of influence and expand, whenever possible, the influence they wield over domestic and foreign policy. They must. To do otherwise is to invite nearly universal reprobation.

There may be political costs to those presidents who overreach. The greatest blows dealt, however, occur when presidents do not vigorously and publicly advance the nation's interests. To do anything less, particularly during times of crisis, is to court disaster – as Bush, the flyover president, learned in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina; and as Obama, the flaccid intellectual, learned during the showdown over the debt ceiling in the summer of 2011. In such moments, presidents appear distinctly unpresidential.

Presidents do not pursue power out of vainglory (though vainglorious they may be). They do so to satisfy us, by whom I mean the contemporary public that holds them and their parties in continual judgment, and the historians who discern and eventually define their legacies. Both constituencies demand action – forthright, public and unapologetic. Those presidents who act are those who fulfill the obligations of their office. Whether their actions and accomplishments are sufficiently prudent, sensitive to the Constitution or statutory limitation, or in line with public sentiment, remain in our politics matters of secondary importance.

If we are troubled by the bold exercise of presidential power, it will not do to beseech the president to change his ways while simultaneously holding him to such outsized expectations. We would do better, if we are serious about the matter, to demand that the adjoining branches of government – namely, Congress and the courts – curtail the power options available for presidents. More foundationally still, we should scale back the demands we so profligately deposit at the feet of our president.

When it comes to power, the dominant trends across presidential administrations are ones of continuity rather than change. The ideological commitments of Bush and Obama differ radically. But when it comes to power, they – like so many of their predecessors – are of a piece.

There simply is no dimension of public life about which the president can claim neither an opinion nor responsibility.

Seeing one of their own assume the presidency in 2009, constitutional law scholars and liberal Whigs anticipated that Obama would restore some semblance of balance to our national politics. Such hopes, though, proved to be misplaced. Rather than temper the use of presidential power, he has worked hard to extend it.

Like Bush, Obama has steadfastly defended his executive privileges, just as he has staunchly guarded private information about all matter of foreign policy matters. Through unilateral directives, he has successively escalated and de-escalated two major wars abroad. Only in light of the scrutiny caused by the Edward Snowden leaks has he pledged any meaningful curtailment of the national security state. In the aftermath of legislative setbacks, Obama has used all sorts of executive orders on both domestic and foreign policy matters. He continues to rely on executive agreements, which do not formally require Senate ratification, in lieu of treaties, which do.

In many ways, then, Obama picked up where Bush left off. His policy objectives differ dramatically from his predecessor's. But the project of building, protecting and expanding executive power is much the same.

Nonetheless, to the ongoing project of presidential expansion, Obama proffers innovations of his own. Some, such as the transformation of modern warmaking through drones, have received a fair measure of public attention. One of the most striking, however, has been hiding in plain sight: the president's efforts to rewrite major education policy through waivers and administrative fiat.

Obligations over education policy are enshrined in state constitutions, not the federal Constitution. Some of the most striking policy developments of the last half-century, however, have come at the behest of the national government. Tracing back to the original Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and following on with the creation of a federal Department of Education under the Carter administration, the federal government generally, and the American president in particular, has sought to influence the ways in which children learn around the country.

Such developments came to a head under the George W. Bush administration. Indeed, arguably the single most important domestic policy achievement of his presidency was the 2002 enactment of

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No Child Left Behind (NCLB). With this law, the federal government helped propagate new systems of accountability, ones that set clear benchmarks for student learning and consequences for schools and districts that failed to meet them.

In 2007, NCLB was first up for reauthorization. Seven years later, it remains so. And in the interim, Congress has done nothing to rectify the most glaring faults of this legislation.

Rather than wait on Congress to fix NCLB, Obama has begun to offer waivers to individual states. Although NCLB remains on the books, he has told states they are free to ignore its most onerous provisions. But he doesn't stop there. The provision of waivers is conditional upon each state's willingness to take up alternative education policies endorsed by the administration – policies, it should be noted, that differ from the contents of NCLB and that most likely would not withstand the legislative process in Congress.

As a general matter, legislation has always trumped unilateral and administrative directives emanating from the president. Executive orders and the like, as a result, have traditionally had to operate in the gaps between legislative pronouncements. But no longer when it comes to federal education policy. Through waivers, Obama is effectively remaking federal law, at once dismantling his predecessor's signature policy achievement and codifying in law his own education policy. Rather than working around Congress' handiwork, then, the president is refashioning it entirely on his own.

What is to be done about this state of affairs? Is ours now a tyrannical presidency, one wholly unaccountable to the people and undaunted by legal or constitutional restraint? And if so, do we have a responsibility to put the president back into the narrow confines established by a narrow reading of Article II powers?

On questions as complex as these, reasonable people can differ. My own view is that the modern presidents are not the bogeymen so many make them out to be. Two reasons help explain why.

First, ample checks remain on the exercise of presidential power. At nearly every turn, presidents confront impediments to their agenda. In Congress, the courts, the administrative state and the larger populace, presidents run up against organized and vocal opponents who work assiduously to undermine their influence. Confer with a former adviser of the president, and she will regale you with tales of heartache and frustration as her boss sought to implement even the most commonsense policy reforms.

> *With Congress mired in gridlock and the courts institutionally incapable of engaging the minutiae of policy debates, presidents alone offer the kind of leadership needed to address the challenges of climate change, the debt, entitlement reform, and on and on.*

The second reason I am not especially keen on reducing the president's power concerns the alternatives on offer. If not the president, then which branch of government can we reliably turn to address the kinds of deep, trenchant, complex national problems we face? With Congress mired in gridlock and the courts institutionally incapable of engaging the minutiae of policy debates, presidents alone offer the kind of leadership needed to address the challenges of climate change, the debt, entitlement reform, and on and on. As the Progressives recognized a century ago, the institutional capacity of the government to solve social problems critically depends on a robust American presidency.

In debates about presidential power, originalist understandings of the Constitution have their place. But so do pragmatic concerns about the capacity of our government to meet contemporary challenges. For the national perspective he offers, the longer time horizon he maintains, and the unique capacity to act with "energy and dispatch," as Alexander Hamilton recognized so long ago, we ought not to shout "tyranny" every time a president uses his powers toward ends we may not share. Presidents who behave this way are not tyrants. Far from it. Rather, in line with their predecessors, they are doing their best in an impossible situation – expected at once to solve massive and complex problems while brandishing constitutional powers fashioned in a bygone era of agrarian farmers, limited government and international isolationism.

William Howell is the Sydney Stein Professor in American Politics at the University of Chicago. He is the author, most recently, of "Thinking About the Presidency: The Primacy of Power" (Princeton University Press) and co-author with Saul Jackman and Jon Rogowski of "The Wartime President: Executive Influence and the Nationalizing Politics of Threat" (University of Chicago Press).

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BACK IN THE USSR

Vladimir Putin dreams as the world scrambles to respond to Russian aggression.

BY ALAN W. DOWD

The most intriguing aspect of Vladimir Putin's Brezhnev-style response to the Kiev Spring is what's not in dispute:

- Before Feb. 28, the Crimean Peninsula was part of Ukraine. Every map said so. Even the Russian government said so.
- Unprovoked, Putin used military force to invade a sovereign nation, seize part of it and systematically disconnect it from the whole. The fact that it was carried out by Russian soldiers scrubbed of Russian insignia doesn't make it any less of an invasion.
- NATO is neither willing nor obligated to reverse Putin's aggression. Whether it should is a subject for another essay. Suffice it to say that being a NATO member has advantages, and Ukraine is not a member.

From these givens, the United States and its allies can craft a response that deals with strategic realities rather than idealistic hopes – and prevents Putin from using Crimea's secession referendum as a template for the piecemeal restoration of the Russian Empire.

CATASTROPHES Putin ascended to power vowing to end a decade of decline in Russia, and that he did. He crushed a rebellion in Chechnya, reasserted Russian influence in the former Soviet Union's footprint, used Russia's energy resources to regain a prominent place on the global stage and decreased cooperation with the West.

This was a dramatic departure from the approach of his predecessor. Boris Yeltsin had democratic instincts, wanted Russia to become part of the West and invited the West into Russia. He was often idealistic, jovial, even silly sometimes – a trait accentuated by his fondness for drink.

Putin is none of those things. The former KGB commissar is serious, sober, cunning and calculating. He thinks in terms of interests – his and Russia's. His instincts are authoritarian. He has pulled Russia away from the West, away from globalization and back toward autarky.

Yeltsin blamed communism for spreading "enmity and unparalleled brutality everywhere … We shall not let it rise again in our land!"

Putin declared, "The demise of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century … Tens of millions of our fellow citizens and countrymen found themselves beyond the fringes of Russian territory."

That speaks volumes about his motives in Ukraine, Georgia and other unfortunates along Russia's borderlands.

Of course, Putin's actions should have gotten the West's attention long before Crimea:

- In addition to dismembering Ukraine and Georgia, Putin's Russia has used energy supplies as a weapon against Central Europe, provided cover for Syria's Assad, claimed a vast swath of the Arctic, violated the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, harbored fugitive spy Edward Snowden, withdrawn from the Nunn-Lugar threat reduction program and conducted a crescendo of provocative war games on NATO's borders. Some have involved feigned invasions of NATO member Poland, complete with mock nuclear strikes.
- Russia's troop presence in the Baltic region – Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania are NATO members – has mushroomed from 16,000 to nearly 100,000.
- Putin's military is a shell of the Red Army, but Russia retains enough punch to overwhelm its neighbors and reincorporate Russian regions of Ukraine, Moldova and the Baltics. Flush with petrodollars, he has increased military spending 31 percent since 2008, with plans to deploy 2,300 new tanks, 600 new warplanes, and 58 new warships and submarines in the next decade.
- He has lunged into the resource-rich Arctic, building new outposts and ports, refurbishing Soviet-era airfields and fielding two Arctic army brigades. "We are open to dialogue with … our neighbors in the Arctic region," he explains. "But naturally, the defense of our geopolitical interests will be hard and consistent."

REVISIONS As the Brookings Institution's Robert Kagan concludes, "It is the entire post-Cold War settlement of the 1990s that Russia resents and wants to revise."

Kagan is not alone in this prognosis. In 2009, Lech Walesa and Vaclav Havel called Putin's Russia "a revisionist power." Former Defense Secretary Robert Gates concludes Putin wants "to re-create … a Russian bloc."

What Winston Churchill said of his Russian counterparts remains true of Putin and his puppets: "There is nothing they admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for weakness, especially military weakness."

Regrettably, weakness is what Putin has perceived in the West. Make no mistake: he is to blame for this crisis. But the West has done little to deter or punish his thuggish behavior. In fact, it has often done the very opposite.

In 2008, Germany and France blocked efforts to invite Georgia and Ukraine into NATO, hoping to mollify Putin. Moscow returned the favor by invading Georgia. Neither the outgoing Bush administration nor incoming Obama administration made Moscow pay a price. Those who counter that NATO dodged a bullet by not inviting these countries in from no man's land miss an important point: Putin's intervention in Ukraine and Georgia – and nonintervention in Poland, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania – suggests that he takes NATO seriously. How long that will last is uncertain.

Another policy Putin saw as a sign of weakness was the Obama administration's scrapping of Bush-era plans to deploy permanent missile-defense assets in Poland and the Czech Republic – plans unanimously endorsed by NATO. In addition, NATO's wholesale defense cuts, especially the nearly $1 trillion in cuts the Pentagon is facing, have sent the wrong message.

The implication of the Obama administration's well-intentioned reset was that Putin wanted a partner, if only Washington would change its tone. That hypothesis has been obliterated. Russia invaded Georgia during the "with-us-or-against-us" Bush administration, and Ukraine during the "lead-from-behind" Obama administration. Putin – not Washington's tone – is the problem.

COSTS Putin must know that the consequences of annexing Crimea, fomenting disorder to justify some sort of Russia-Ukraine union and redrawing borders by force will be real and lasting. This is complicated by Russia's historic connection to Crimea, domination of Ukraine's natural gas supply, military advantage over Kiev and calculating approach. (Everything that has followed Ukraine's ouster of its pro-Russian president – the Russian army's stealth invasion and "snap" border maneuvers, the Duma's rubber-stamp authorization, Crimea's readymade secession referendum, the manufactured protests in Ukrainian border towns – suggests Putin had planned this.)

However, those who frame the situation as a choice between reversing Putin's fait accompli by force and appeasing naked aggression by inaction overlook a menu of options.

Just as President Jimmy Carter altered his approach to Moscow after the invasion of Afghanistan, the invasion of Ukraine means it's time to re-set the reset.

Russian troops stand guard with assault rifles and heavy armor near the besieged coast guard headquarters in Simferopol, Crimea. Corbis

The first step is to reacquaint Russia with the U.S. military's deterrent strength by stopping the slide toward sequestration's bipartisan guillotine. This would translate into recapitalizing the fleet, reopening the F-22 production line, fast-tracking development of the Long-Range Strike Bomber, reversing cuts to Army and Marine Corps end strength, and deploying Arctic-capable assets.

The political support may be just under the surface: President Ronald Reagan noted that Moscow's shootdown of KAL 007 "gave badly needed impetus in Congress to the rearmament program."

We can thank Putin for reminding NATO's ambivalent members that their core mission is deterrence. Washington should use this opportunity to help each NATO ally lift defense spending to NATO's 2-percent-of-GDP standard. If we remove U.S. defense spending from the picture, alliance members spend an average of 1.3 percent of GDP on defense.

As the allies rebuild, they must revitalize Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty – NATO's all-for-one collective defense clause. Only once in its history has NATO invoked Article V – on Sept. 12, 2001 – yet some NATO members don't take Article V seriously. If they did, European defense spending wouldn't have shrunk by 15 percent in the decade after 9/11, Washington wouldn't have had to beg for troops in Afghanistan, and the

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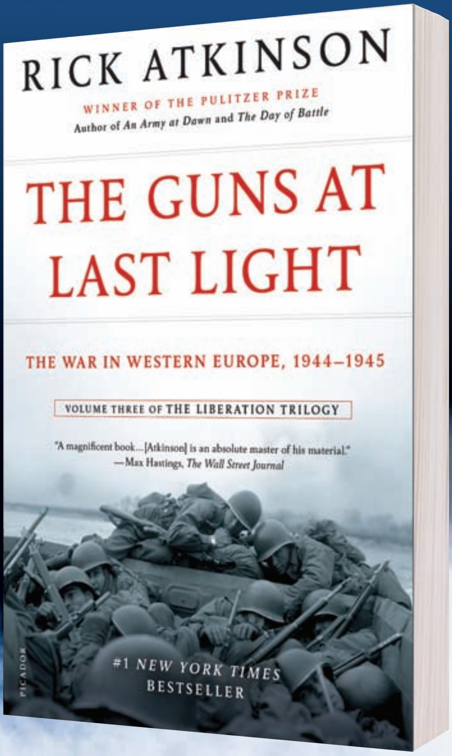
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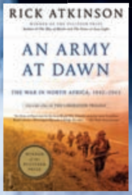
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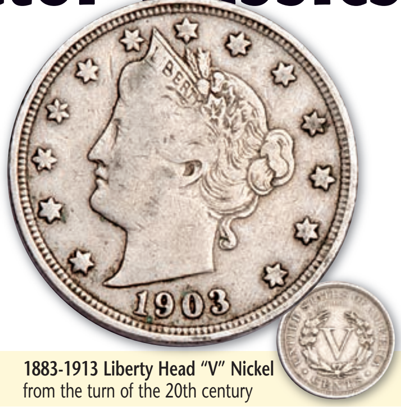
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troops sent wouldn't have limits placed on where and how they fight. If NATO's members don't take Article V seriously, neither will its enemies.

To remedy this perception, NATO recently returned to "high-intensity, large-scale exercises." The first of these was conducted in Poland, Latvia and the Baltic Sea in late 2013. Perhaps the next should be conducted in Hungary, Romania and the Black Sea – all bordering Ukraine.

Finally, NATO should shutter the NATO-Russia Council. It's obvious what Putin thinks about NATO's extended hand.

Putin is not Hitler. But as longtime Pentagon official Dov Zakheim observes, "The West is full of (Neville) Chamberlains," referring to the British prime minister known for his appeasement policy. To extend the historical parallel, the world thirsts for a Churchill, someone to rally the demoralized democracies.

President Obama could fill that role by employing his formidable rhetorical skills against Putinism. He could start by reminding the world what the people of Kiev did to invite Putin's wrath: they took a step toward Europe, protested when their president tried to yank them back into Moscow's orbit and ousted him when he gunned them down.

Obama should also highlight Putin's aversion to free government. Putin has engineered his way from prime minister to president to prime minister to president in the past 14 years. As Kagan observes, "Elections do not offer a choice but only a chance to ratify choices made by Putin." And Obama should expose Putin's assault on human rights by offering a platform to Putin's enemies: journalists, evangelical Christians, those persecuted for their sexual orientation, political dissidents. "A little less detente," as Reagan counseled, "and more encouragement to the dissenters might be worth a lot of armored divisions."

CHESSBOARD "Our approach," Obama said of the Syrian and Crimean crises, "is not to see these as some Cold War chessboard in which we're in competition with Russia."

But Putin is playing chess, and he's winning. The good news is that Washington has many moves to make.

Russia should be jettisoned from the G-8. Before 1998 it was a club of liberal industrialized democracies. If Russia ever met that membership criteria, it doesn't today.

Washington prudently dispatched fighter jets to the Baltics and Poland, and warships to the Black Sea, after Putin's seizure of Crimea. But there are more pieces to move in Eastern Europe. The EU should send observers to Ukraine, and retired Army Maj. Gen. Bob Scales recommends the deployment of "American tanks in Poland to send a message to Putin."

Washington could also build those permanent missile-defense sites in eastern Europe. There's precedent for this: after North Korea's spasms in 2013, Obama reversed course and ordered the Pentagon to complete Bush-era plans for ground-based interceptors in Alaska.

The outlines of a NATO Arctic partnership should move forward. The groundwork is in place: Denmark has an Arctic command, Canada an Arctic training center, Norway an Arctic headquarters; the Pentagon recently unveiled its first-ever Arctic strategy. It's time for these NATO allies to coordinate their efforts.

In addition, NATO should revisit expansion. There's momentum in Sweden for NATO membership, and Georgia is eager for NATO to issue a Membership Action Plan, a pathway to full membership. As for Ukraine, with Kiev's politics in flux, now is not the time for membership. But the West needs to view the besieged country as a partner to be nurtured, not a problem to be managed. Clearly, Washington has some work to do in this regard: when Kiev asked for military equipment and intelligence, the Obama administration offered MREs. Food rations will not deter Putin.

Finally, Washington should open America's oil-and-gas spigot and watch Putin's petrodollar economy wither. Pumping more U.S. oil into the global market would drive prices down, and delivering U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG) to central Europe would weaken Putin's grip on the region. But getting LNG from the United States into Europe depends on U.S. export-terminal capacity, and that depends on government approval. Toward that end, several European ambassadors to the United States recently urged House Speaker John Boehner to initiate "congressional action to expedite LNG exports to America's allies."

To be sure, some of these policies will take time to bite, but they send a firm message to Putin that swallowing Crimea is going to hurt.

That's important in dealing with him. When the message is "hard and consistent," to use Putin's language, Russia will take a cooperative posture. When the message is muddled, it will take what it can get.

Alan W. Dowd is a contributing editor for The American Legion Magazine.

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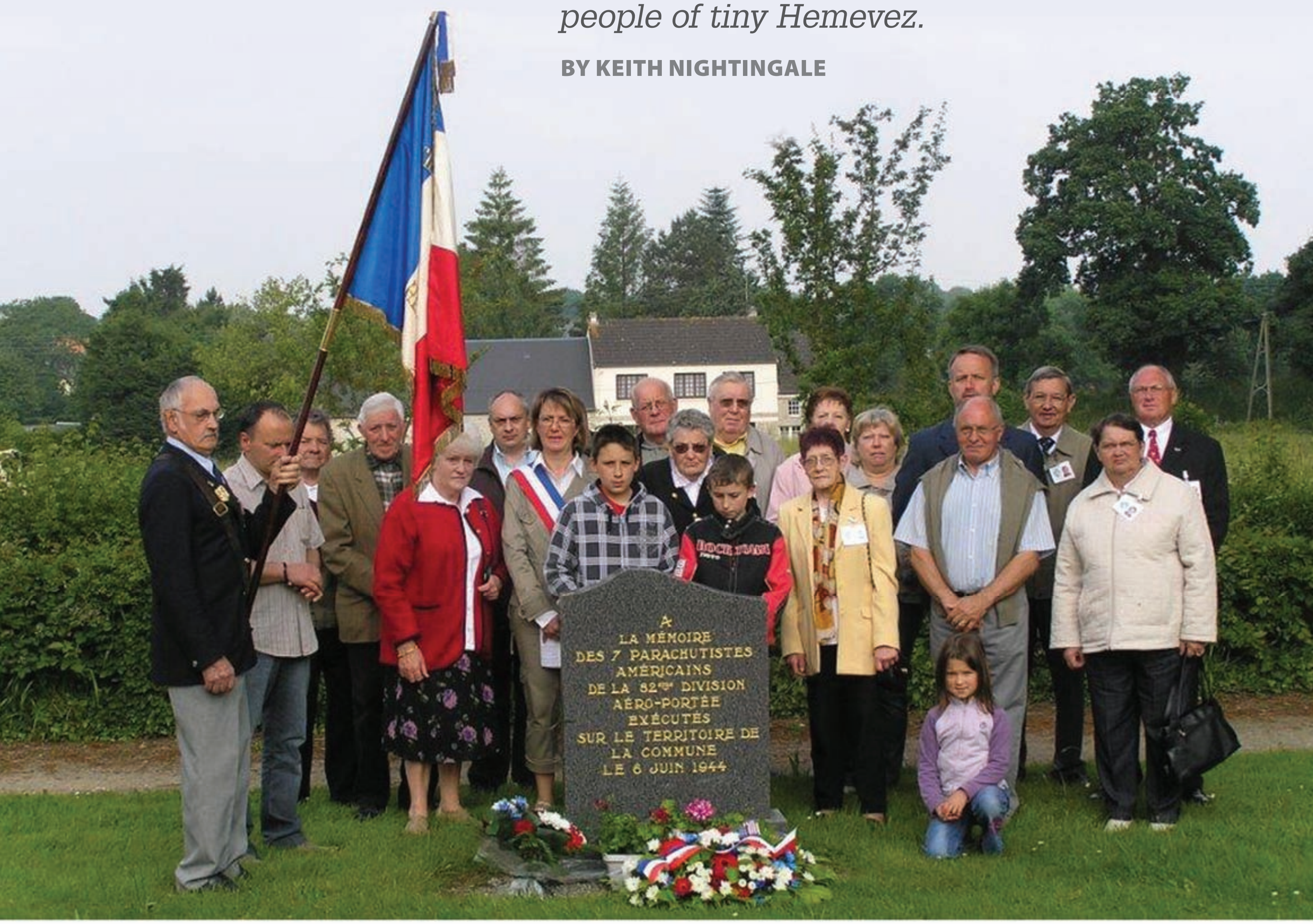
The meaning of NORMANDY

Remembrance is all that matters to the people of tiny Hemevez.

BY KEITH NIGHTINGALE


À
LA MÉMOIRE
DES 7 PARACHUTISTES
AMÉRICAINS
DE LA 82ème DIVISION
AÉRO-PORTÉE
EXÉCUTÉS
SUR LE TERRITOIRE DE
LA COMMUNE
LE 6 JUIN 1944

As time proceeds, memories diminish, and the significance ebbs into oblivion. Occasional bursts of remembrance may capture a moment in time and permit some symbolic gesture of recognition for an event that occurred 70 years ago: the Normandy invasion. Presidents, prime ministers, royalty and a panoply of civilization will assemble on the week of June 6 to commemorate that profoundly historic event and pledge fealty to its spirit and sacrifice. The beaches will be serenaded by bands, banners, pomp and circumstance. Speeches will be made by elected and appointed leaders of nations, recounting the events and their meanings. Then, as quickly as they assembled, the crowds will disappear and the events they came to commemorate will drift with the tide. But the real meaning of Normandy and what happened there on June 6, 1944, will live on in the rural towns and villages of the Cotentin Peninsula, where the invasion is more than an annual date to circle on the calendar. Such a place is Hemevez.

Hemevez is a small, obscure farm town near the more populated city of Picauville. One would need an acute desire to visit and a great sense of navigation, or be hopelessly lost, to encounter it. Yet on the slight high ground of the village center resides what inhabitants believe Normandy and the invasion was all about.

The hill is dominated by a small church and a copse of trees. The church is encircled by a graveyard several hundred years old and monuments to the various wars that the men of Hemevez have fought. The monuments are near an open farm field and gathered together, much like the gravestones of the past. On one edge, in an open, sunny place, is a particularly unique marker of polished black granite with gold letters. Unlike the others, it is not an obelisk but a rectangle. There are words and names incised on it and lettered in gold. A small gravel walkway leads from the church to the front of this monument. It truly stands alone among the others. It is treated as such.

Across the top are simple words in French: "In Remembrance of the Fallen Soldiers 6 June 1944." Under that are seven names, all members of the 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division. On the night of June 6, 1944, 14 soldiers of Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 507th PIR were misdropped over the small village of Hemevez at around 0240, and seven were captured by the local German unit. On the back of the monument is another message, also in French:

In memory of the 7 American Parachutists of the 82nd Airborne Division who were executed in the vicinity of this community 6 June 1944

The seven captured men were lined up and shot in a field near the church. The villagers buried them within the grounds and later, as the Allies cleared the area, repatriated the bodies. The villagers, however, did not forget the seven or what they signified. They built the monument in their memory, and each year, during the anniversary period, the entire village gathers in the churchyard and remembers those teenagers of long ago and what they meant for their grandparents, for them, and for succeeding generations.

This is not a contrived event. Hemevez is as obscure as a distant rural French village can be. No one remarkable, French or American, appears there except on the rarest of occasions, and then it's often by chance. This is not important to the village. The residents know why they assemble and why it matters.

The sun peaks over the roof of the church. Next to the monument, the mayor takes his place. A farmer by trade, he is wearing his best and only suit and tie, with a stained shirt and shoes still muddy with the residue of his livelihood. The prefect of the church has an old CD player. Next to them, in line, are the local historical representatives of the French Resistance, Army units and Foreign Legion, with their flags. They are humbly dressed, like the mayor.

Any attendees not from the village are brought forward to a place of honor. The mayor begins by playing the U.S. national anthem from a CD, a somewhat broken and stuttering reproduction. He then plays "La Marseillaise." Every citizen, as is the French custom – including the flag bearers – sings lustily and with emphasis. At the conclusion, donkeys in the adjacent field begin to bray, lending a concluding chorus to the affair.

The mayor signals for the CD to be stopped and, ignoring the braying, quietly recounts the events of that night so long ago. The villagers stand mute, thinking about the words that describe what happened. The mayor pauses and begins again.

He quietly reads each name graven in gold:

Pfc Elsworth M. HECK
Pvt Anthony J. HITZTALER
Pvt Andrew W. KLING
Pvt Delmar C. McELHANEY
Pfc Daniel B. TILLMAN
Pvt Robert G. WATSON
Pvt Robert E. WERNER

At the conclusion of each name's reading, villagers firmly voice in unison, "Mort por la France." After the seventh name is read, the mayor turns to the village priest, who prays. Most of the residents cross themselves, turn quietly and depart. Some linger and drop flowers by the monument. The cattle peer through the wire as the ceremony closes. The donkeys feed in the tall grass, and the sun settles behind the church.

Every year, the village repeats this ceremony. Every year, they repeat the names and remember what they mean, in a part of Normandy unseen by the thousands who come each year and never happen upon Hemevez. Being seen is not important to the village. They know why they come together and why they always will.

Retired U.S. Army Col. Keith Nightingale is a military history writer and frequent contributor to The American Legion Magazine.

‘We are not giving up on him’

A Colorado community and The American Legion rally around the family of an Army veteran lost in last year’s historic floods.

BY KEN OLSEN

Corbis

Before Gerry Boland went missing, he made his way to Lyons Elementary School to make sure the lights were on for people taking refuge from the floods ravaging Colorado's Front Range last September. Then the 80-year-old retired teacher and coach braved the storm to find his wife, Cheron. He had lost sight of her after they attempted to leave Lyons in separate vehicles.

Gerry Boland

At the same time, Cheron was searching for him. She was rescued moments before the rising water engulfed her car, but Gerry vanished. A week later, his body was found a few hundred yards from the ruins of the couple's home. "What the two of them did was so heroic," daughter Amy Hoh says. "They went back to look for each other without thinking, 'Will I be safe?'"

That's the couple's legacy: stay focused on helping someone else, to the very end.

"Mr. Boland didn't simply pass on," says Adam Mack, who grew up a mile from the Bolands and was one of Gerry's sixth-grade students. "For the last 50 years, he's been passing down his leadership skills, his sense of direction, his humor."

The week it took to find him, marked by false sightings and futile searches, was wrenching for the family, friends and community who loved him. "Everyone mobilized," says Holli Stetson, Gerry's oldest daughter. "Everyone said, 'We've got to find Mr. Boland.'"

It's easy to understand why he was regarded as the sort of self-reliant individual who would find a way to ride out the deluge that dumped more than 12 inches of rain in the first two days of the storm alone. Gifted with an optimistic, can-do attitude, he was known for his love of the outdoors and leading the local Boy Scout troop on 50-mile canoe trips. "At that time, there were a couple hundred people missing," Mack says. "I really thought he had found his way to the home of a neighbor who had no power and no phone."

Born in Kansas, Gerry Boland was 8 when his parents divorced. His mother supported them by cooking in a café and bringing home leftovers. "He would reflect on having French onion soup for breakfast," Stetson says. To extend the life of his shoes, he'd use discarded cardboard boxes to make insoles.

Gerry served in the Army in the early 1950s. The armistice was signed four days before he was scheduled to go to Korea, Stetson says. Using the GI Bill, he enrolled in what is now the University of Northern Colorado in the fall of 1955. Seated alphabetically, he found himself next to Cheron Cruise in all their freshman classes.

"He was very handsome," Cheron says. "I was impressed." The couple got to know each other over coffee at the student union. Meanwhile, Gerry started singing with the college's show choir, the Choral Aires, which followed Bob Hope's troop-entertainment tour through Korea and Japan in the late 1950s.

Gerry and Cheron married in August 1959 and moved to Lyons, where Gerry got a job teaching high school science and Cheron was hired to teach fourth grade. They soon purchased the house near the North St. Vrain River where they raised Holli, Amy and son Brent.

Five years into his teaching career, Gerry took over Lyons' sixth-grade class but continued to coach high school basketball and football. Both daughters had him as their teacher, calling him "Mr. Dad."

"He told me I had to work twice as hard because I was the teacher's kid," Stetson says.

Stetson especially appreciated her father's rapport with students after she became a high school teacher and volleyball coach in nearby Longmont. "They knew he cared about them. As a teacher and a coach, I know kids need that. Not everyone gets that at home."

Gerry's stewardship went beyond the classroom. He started an outdoor education program called Eco-Week for his students near Rocky Mountain National Park. He was involved with several service organizations, including American Legion Post 32 in Longmont.

Busy as they were, Gerry and Cheron never missed their children's sporting events. Gerry sat down with them after games to talk about their performances. That included asking his son how many assists he'd made during a basketball game instead of how many points he scored.

"I considered that a disappointment," Brent says. "Now I realize he wasn't teaching basketball. He was teaching life. It's not about you. It's about the people around you."

During the 52 years Gerry and Cheron lived near the river, there was never a flood warning. So Gerry was skeptical when the evacuation order came at 2:30 a.m. last Sept. 12. Cheron persuaded him to move. They headed for Stetson's house about five miles away, taking separate vehicles with the idea that they would save both their car and pickup if the flood came. When they got to the south end of Lyons, they saw that a bridge was washed out, so they turned back toward town. But there were no streetlights, and they lost track of each other in the darkness and rain.

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Cheron pulled over in a restaurant parking lot and waited for Gerry to drive by. Meanwhile, Gerry went to the elementary school, the official shelter and the place he taught for most of his 30-year career. The school's power was operating, so he turned on the lights, asked people if they had seen Cheron, and left to search for her.

Meanwhile, Cheron waited a few hours, then left to look for her husband. Her car stalled in rising waters as she got to the edge of town, and she called 911. A half-hour later, a wetsuit-clad rescue team used a front-end loader to get to Cheron. They put her in a life jacket and drove her to the elementary school in the muddy loader bucket. "I had a few bruises, but I made it out," she says. "All the people up on the cliff were cheering."

A bystander recorded the rescue with a mobile phone, and the footage made the news. Even as they watched it on TV, Cheron's children didn't recognize the car or realize that the woman being carried to safety was their mother until Stetson got a call reporting that she was at a shelter.

"Where my mom's car stalled, there are signs that say, 'In case of flash flood, climb to safety,'" Hoh says. "That scared me as a little girl. And my dad would say, 'It's never going to flash flood.'"

Early on, the family assumed Gerry had made it back home and was stuck there. They didn't realize the St. Vrain had jumped its banks and plowed right through the house. A FEMA rescue team wasn't able to get inside the house until late on Sept. 13, to discover that Gerry was not there.

The family's fraying emotions were pummeled by false reports. They received one call saying that Gerry was on the last evacuation bus out of Lyons. The family searched every shelter in the area. The next day, a resident told them Gerry's body had been found in his truck, also not true.

Later that weekend, a detective called to say that Gerry's pickup had been found near a neighbor's house, but the high, swift water made it unsafe to try to reach the vehicle. One day later, they learned that Gerry wasn't with his truck. Cheron remained resilient. "Mom said, 'We are not giving up on him until we hear that final sentence,'" Hoh says.

A week after the evacuation order, Gerry's body was found a few hundred yards from his house.

More than 1,000 people attended his memorial service a few weeks later, including people who sang with him in the Choral Aires.

Ralph Bozella of The American Legion's Department of Colorado immediately called the Boland family and offered help. "They were the first of any organizations to reach out," Hoh says. "And they reached out in a big, big way. My mother was so touched by it."

The way the community turned out to search for Gerry and comfort his wife and children was his final gift to his family, years in the making. "He made a huge impact on people," Hoh says. "The love from his community came back to love us when we needed it."

Ken Olsen is a frequent contributor to The American Legion Magazine.

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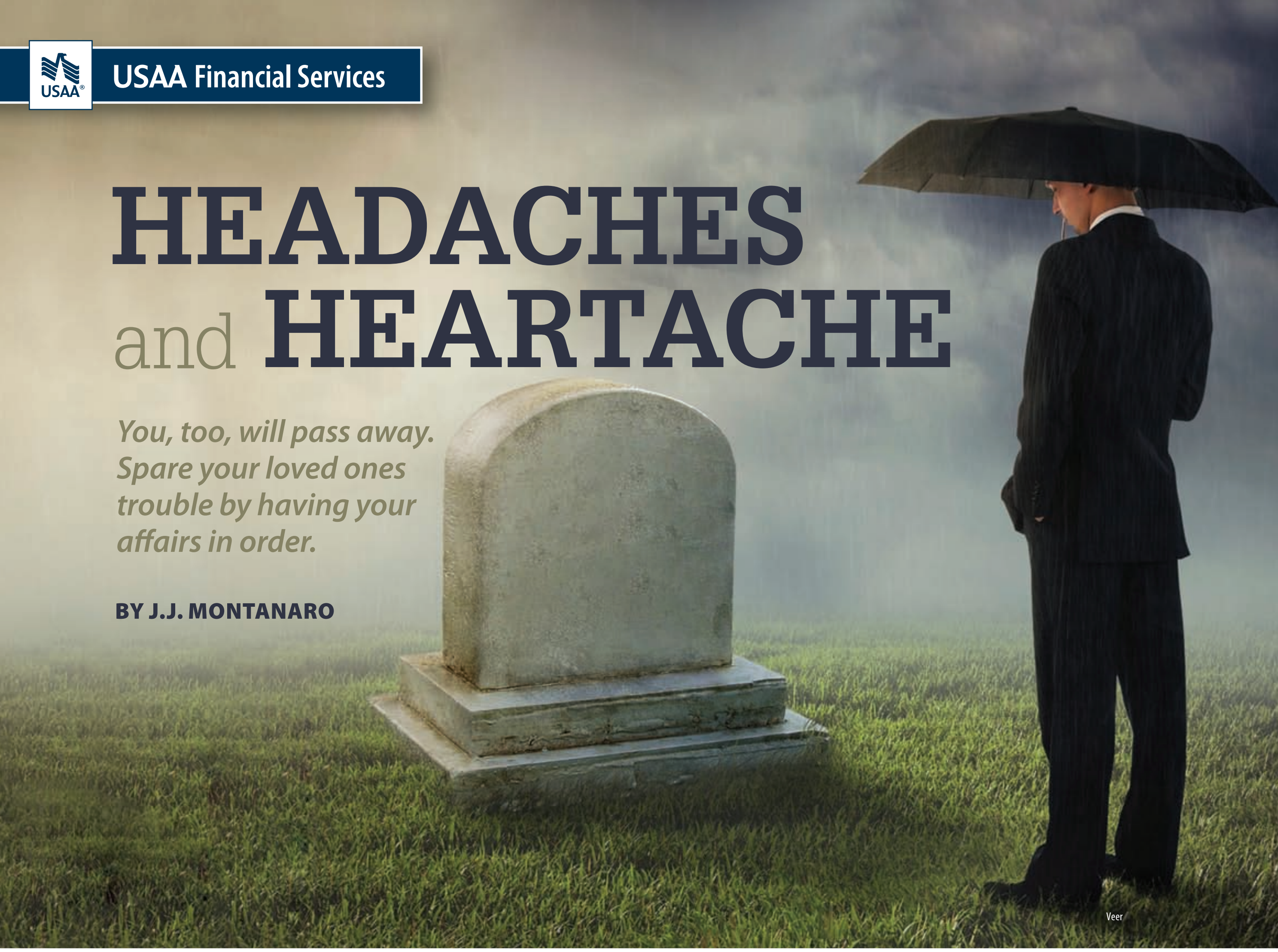
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HEADACHES and HEARTACHE

You, too, will pass away. Spare your loved ones trouble by having your affairs in order.

BY J.J. MONTANARO

I just signed the last tax return as executor of an estate, putting the final administrative stamp on what's been a long journey.

Last summer I lost a good friend and colleague to brain cancer. In fact, June Walbert and I worked together on financial columns for *The American Legion Magazine*. As a close friend and financial teammate, I was by June's side during the final 14 months of her life. I learned a lot during that time. In fact, there are lessons we can all take from her experience as we put our own affairs in order. And I know June would smile knowing that her story was the spark that caused you to get the job done.

June was a bit of a collector. Knickknacks, trinkets and, yes, financial information were tucked in notebooks and boxes throughout her house. But after coming to grips with the reality of terminal cancer, one of June's first actions was to round up all her relevant financial documents. Using the USAA Education Foundation's Guide for Your Survivors, she listed all her accounts, insurance and key points of contact. This was so helpful in making things run smoothly over the next year.

LEGAL DOCUMENTS When June dragged me with her to see an estate planning attorney just weeks after surgery, her financial documents helped provide a comprehensive picture for us. She didn't want to dwell on the task, but she knew she needed to update her legal documents.

For me, this experience drove home the value of working with an experienced attorney to make an estate plan. From thinking of things we hadn't considered to just holding our hands through the process, June's attorney was a true ally.

As part of her plan, June used a financial power of attorney to define a financial decision-making framework in the event that she lost her ability. Just a few months later, her memory began to suffer. As her agent, I began to pay her bills. If you're married, your spouse will be the ideal person to take over if you're unable to manage your finances. If you're not married or maybe even

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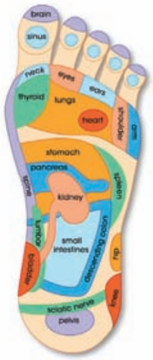
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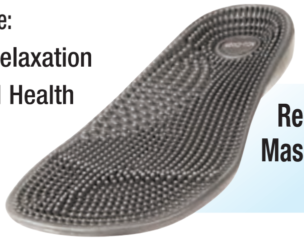

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if you are, you should consider selecting a non-spouse as a backup. Here, caution and practicality should prevail. You obviously want someone you can trust, but it also may be helpful to have a person who is close by instead of a friend who's across the country.

On the health side, June created a medical power of attorney to authorize specific family members to make decisions when she wasn't able. This document was used late in her illness. A living will, in which you outline your wishes with respect to life-sustaining activities (feeding tube, etc.), is another important part of your preparations.

Along with the decision-making documents, you also need to prepare for the distribution of your property. A will and possibly a trust should explain who gets what. If you're like June, you may have IRAs, life insurance, retirement plans and other assets that have beneficiary designations. These supersede what's in your will, so it's critical that your documents are synchronized to reflect your wishes. Your will also names an executor or personal representative to manage your estate. Initially, June had named a family member, but she later decided that there would be less stress and fewer disagreements in the family if an outsider was responsible. That's where I stepped in.

FINAL EXPENSES Funeral services, burial, legal expenses and maybe even relatives' travel costs – they're all part of someone's final expenses. According to the National Funeral Directors Association, the average cost for a funeral is more than $7,000, so it's easy to see how the total cost could escalate quickly. Do you have money set aside for your final expenses? Will your family have access to the money?

June decided to set up a joint savings account with a family member to cover these costs. That's a best-case scenario. If you have the money, it won't be a problem for your spouse. If you're not married, you'll have to discuss with your attorney the best way to make that money available for your designated representative.

If you don't have the cash, a life-insurance policy may prevent your departure from causing a financial burden. If you're going to buy life insurance, consider a permanent or whole life policy. Shop around for a good price, delve into the details and understand any exceptions or exclusions.

Finally, see that your family knows what's available through VA. As a veteran, June was entitled to burial in a VA national cemetery, a flag, a headstone and honors. Some veterans may be eligible for a burial allowance. When my father passed away a couple of years ago, I arranged for a beautiful service and burial at Arlington National Cemetery. It was a surprisingly easy process; just make sure your family has access to your DD-214 and is aware of what VA offers.

WISH LIST Clear communication, detailed information and good planning help things run smoothly during bad circumstances. If your spouse is not involved in day-to-day finances, make sure he or she knows about your accounts and where to find things. If you want to be cremated instead of buried, make sure your will says so. If you want your favorite jewelry to go to your granddaughter and your antique desk to go to your cousin, leave specific guidance about who should get what.

June actually walked through her house and made a list of her wishes. That small step prevented a lot of hard feelings when she passed away. I've had many clients say that distributing personal property sparked the most family conflict. Her guidance eliminated most of that.

June had the time, foresight and motivation to make these decisions before she got too sick. It's never too early for you to think about, because you never know what the future holds.

So follow June's lead and get your affairs in order before you are facing the end. The one certainty of life – for all of us – is that it does end. We may not know how or when, but it's best to plan ahead and be prepared. When the time comes, you don't want to add headaches to the heartache your loved ones will feel.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA Financial Planning Services, one of the USAA family of companies. USAA is The American Legion's preferred provider for financial services.

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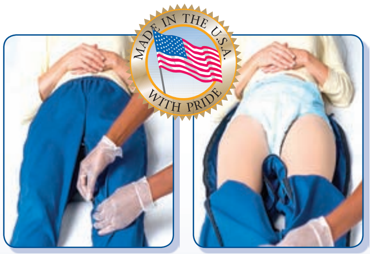
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GALLERY

FLAG DAY 2014

Soldiers of III Corps honor the U.S. flag as they lower it during a retreat ceremony at Fort Hood, Texas. DVIDS

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>
> **Alvin Owsley,** World War I veteran, U.S. ambassador and past national commander of The American Legion

LEGIONNAIRES IN ACTION

Post aids Oso mudslide victims

Photo by Sofia Jaramillo / *The Daily Herald*

On March 22, the town of Oso, Wash., was devastated when a massive mudslide killed 35 people and destroyed dozens of homes. Food, clothing and other necessities poured into the nearby town of Arlington, but neighboring Darrington was cut off from those supplies as the highway connecting the towns was flooded.

Members of American Legion Post 91 in Burlington, Wash., knew the importance of moving the overflow of supplies from Arlington to Darrington. They quickly mapped out a different route and borrowed a Toys for Tots truck from the Skagit Valley Marine Corps League.

In three trips from Arlington to Darrington, Post 91 members hauled more than 2,800 pounds of supplies and logged 482 miles.

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TECHNOLOGY

Fill ’er up with seawater

The *Daily Mail* of Britain reports that U.S. Navy scientists may be on the verge of developing a “game-changing … radical new fuel made from seawater.” The “liquid hydrocarbon” fuel has already been used to power a radio-controlled plane.

To turn seawater into jet fuel, the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) “begins by extracting carbon dioxide and hydrogen from seawater,” the *Mail* explains. “As seawater passes through a specially built cell, it is subjected to a small electric current. This causes the seawater to exchange hydrogen ions produced at the anode with sodium ions. As a result, the seawater is acidified. Meanwhile, at the cathode, the water is reduced to hydrogen gas and sodium hydroxide is formed.” The yield is hydrogen and carbon dioxide gas. “In the next step, the hydrogen and carbon dioxide are passed into a heated reaction chamber with an iron catalyst. The gases combine and form long-chained unsaturated hydrocarbons with methane as a byproduct. The unsaturated hydrocarbons are then made to form longer hydrocarbon molecules containing six to nine carbon atoms. Using a nickel-supported catalyst, these are then converted into jet fuel.”

In short, U.S. warships could theoretically be able to produce their own fuel on board. Researchers say this could be as soon as a decade away.

ACTIVE DUTY

Recession economy hits military families

In fiscal 2013, U.S. troops “redeemed almost $104 million worth of food stamps at commissaries,” *Government Executive* reports. Military families’ use of the federal government’s food-assistance program “has increased by more than 300 percent since 2007.”

The trend reflects increased reliance on federal assistance among the general population. “Americans across the country have turned to the federal government’s assistance program during the economic downturn, and many states have lowered their standards to qualify for food stamps.”

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> **“My soldiers have been fighting now for 12, 13 years in hard combat – hard combat – and anybody that has spent any time in this war has been changed by it. It’s that simple.”**

Adm. William McRaven, head of Special Operations Command, saying that suicide rates for U.S. troops serving in elite units have hit all-time highs. In 2012, more active-duty servicemembers – 350 – killed themselves than were killed in combat.

Source: *The Washington Times*

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Sweden to join NATO?

Russia’s annexation of Ukraine’s Crimean peninsula has forced a shift in attitudes in Sweden, which is now considering joining NATO. Jan Björklund, Sweden’s deputy prime minister, is calling for a “comprehensive strategic military re-think” and wants Sweden to “set the wheels in motion” to join NATO, *Defense News* reports.

In addition, Sweden plans to increase defense spending. “Politicians of different stripes are now saying there should be an expansion in the defense budget and a strengthening of the country’s military presence on the strategically important island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea,” *The Wall Street Journal* adds.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

USMC to form Middle East response team

The Marine Corps plans to form a new crisis-response unit in the Middle East in fiscal 2015, *Marine Corps Times* reports.

The “Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force” will include 1,900 Marines and sailors, along with “several fixed-wing and tilt-rotor aircraft,” according to the *Times*. The unit’s air assets will include AV-8B Harriers, F/A-18 Hornets, MV-22 Ospreys and KC-130J Super Hercules. USMC has not decided where to locate the rapid-reaction force, though “it’s likely the unit would be based at an existing military installation,” the paper reports.

ASK A SERVICE OFFICER

Melanoma, myeloma and Agent Orange

Tracy L. Davis
Department Service Officer, Missouri

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Multiple myeloma is a cancer of the plasma cell, a type of white blood cell. Plasma cells normally make antibodies to help you fight infections. With multiple myeloma, a group of plasma cells becomes cancerous and multiplies, raising their total number to a higher-than-normal level. If you are experiencing symptoms, a number of treatments are available to help control the disease.

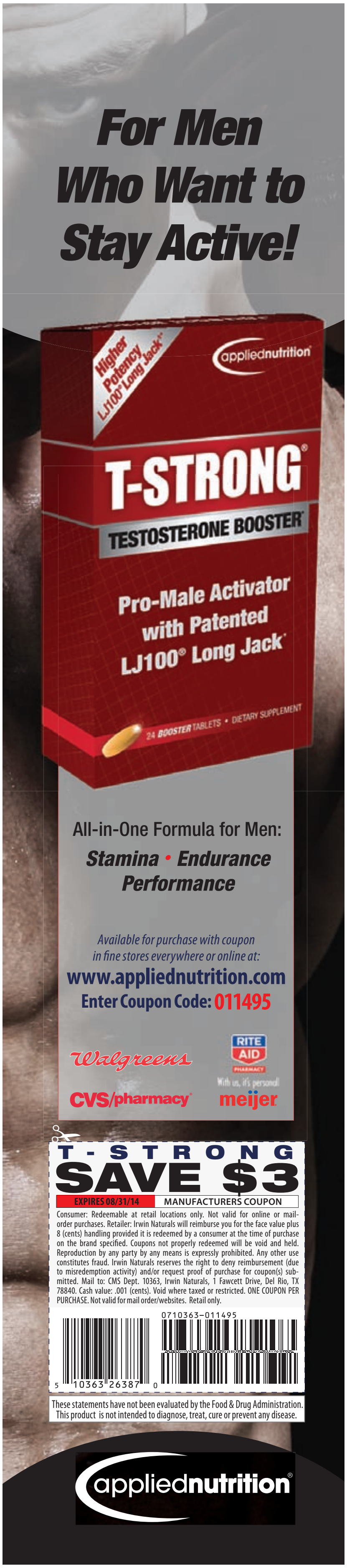
Melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer, develops in the cells (melanocytes) that produce melanin – the pigment that gives your skin its color. The exact cause of all melanomas isn't clear, but exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from sunlight or tanning lamps and beds increases your risk.

Getting service connection for a disease not on the presumptive list is possible. Work with a service officer to help you with your claim.

Find an American Legion service officer in your state:

www.legion.org/serviceofficers

*Do you have a question for Department of Missouri Service Officer Tracy Davis about the claims process or veterans benefits in general? Send it to **askso@legion.org**.*



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HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

Thousands join Bataan memorial march

BY MIKE FITZGERALD

Ben Skardon of Clemson, S.C., belongs to an exclusive club, one that grows more exclusive with each passing year.

Skardon, 96, survived the infamous Bataan Death March, one of the worst atrocities ever inflicted on U.S. troops.

In April 1942, following a four-month battle, Japan captured the Philippines. Eager for retribution, its troops forced nearly 80,000 exhausted U.S. and Filipino POWs on an 80-mile trek up the Bataan Peninsula. Along the way, up to 600 Americans and 10,000 Filipinos died from disease, heat, hunger and physical abuse. POWs who couldn't keep up were beheaded on the spot or bayoneted by Japanese soldiers for sport, according to historical accounts.

The low point for Skardon, an infantry lieutenant, came in December 1944, when he and 1,600 other Americans were crammed into the hold of a Japanese "hell ship" bound for a prison camp in Japan. "Thus began a 47-day nightmare of horrendous inhumanity and barbarism," the retired Army colonel recalled in a speech at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico on March 23.

To honor Skardon and other Bataan survivors, as well as the thousands who perished in captivity, White Sands and the New Mexico National Guard sponsor an annual "ruck challenge" across the rugged mountains and deep sands of the state's southwest. Participants join a 14.2-mile honorary march or a 26.2-mile march for time. They can run it as a conventional race or haul rucksacks weighing at least 35 pounds while competing against the clock in individual and team categories.

For this year's 25th anniversary of the challenge, more than 6,200 people – active-duty military and civilians – gathered in White Sands to pay tribute to the fighting spirit, courage and resilience of the "Battling Bastards of Bataan."

New Mexico is a natural home for the event, since nearly 2,000 of the 12,000 U.S. troops captured were assigned to New Mexico-based National Guard units, including the 200th Coast Artillery Regiment. About half came home alive.

At a pre-dawn ceremony to honor the Bataan survivors, emcee Cammy Montoya read the names of the 12 Bataan survivors seated before her. When she read Skardon's name, he called back in a loud and unwavering voice: "Here!"

A few minutes later, the crowd heard the names of the 24 Bataan survivors who had passed away in the past year.

That moment was profound for Capt. Tony Zucca, an Army intelligence officer based at Scott Air Force Base, Ill. His grandfather, Dino Zucca, was a Bataan survivor who had died in the late '50s, two decades before Zucca was born.

Joining a friend for his second time in the 26.2-mile course, Zucca is committed to participating in the annual ruck challenge until the last Bataan survivor passes away.

"It's the only real connection I feel with my grandpa. I'm out there for hours, and all I get to think about is him. In no other time in my life do I get to just reflect on how he felt."

Wounded warriors Russell Dennison, left, and Allan Armstrong prepare to participate in the 25th annual Bataan Death March Memorial Ruck Challenge at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., on March 23. Photo by Mike Fitzgerald

In 2012, during his first attempt on the course, Zucca carried a 62-pound pack and suffered from foot blisters. This year he suffered only one blister, but had to contend with a cracked rib and pain around his hips and knees.

Around the third mile, Zucca spotted a disabled veteran attempting to travel the course on a specially adapted tricycle with blown tires. "He was trying to repair his tires to move on," he said. "I wasn't going to whine another minute the rest of the day. I didn't care how much it hurt."

Twenty-five wounded warriors attempted the White Sands course with the help of 25 volunteers from Disabled Sports USA of Rockville, Md.

One was Army Staff Sgt. Allan Armstrong of the 82nd Airborne, who lost his right leg below the knee when his motorcycle collided with a truck on a Georgia highway.

On the day before the ruck challenge, Armstrong said he couldn't wait to test his prosthetic leg on the 26.2-mile course. "I really want to do this," he said. "I think I'm ready."

Russell Dennison of the 25th Infantry Division lost both legs from an IED blast while deployed to Afghanistan in 2012. He also pronounced himself ready for the challenge ahead. "You've got to build up to it," he said.

Both men both finished the 26.2-mile course.

"It was definitely harder than I thought it would be," Armstrong said. "The sand made it the most difficult, because walking on my prosthetic, you don't have the ankle strength." He said it was important for him finish the course to "memorialize what happened to past wounded warriors, and ... it lets me know I can accomplish things like this, even with my injuries."

Mike Fitzgerald is a reporter with the Belleville News-Democrat *in Illinois.*

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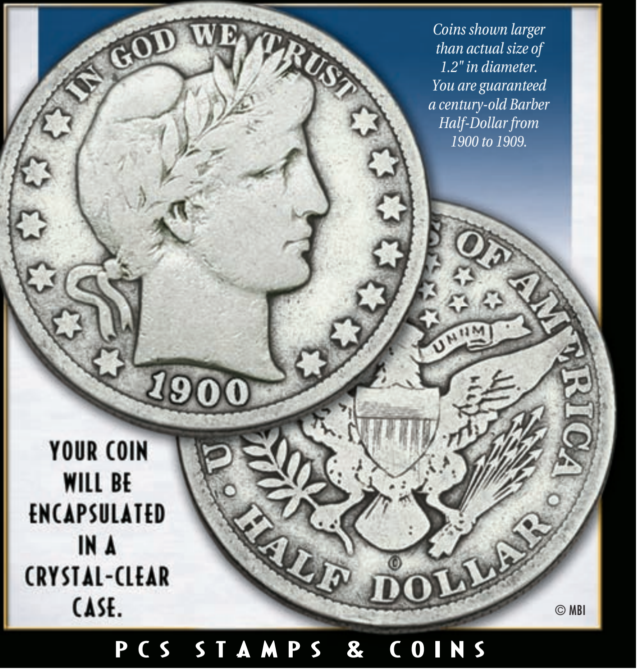

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> ***"Conflict is the fuel of change, and change is the engine of the Constitution. Conflict led to the formation of this country, conflict drives us every year to select representatives in government, and conflict underlies every policy, every court case, every decision that determines the course of our future. The right amount of tension holds together the foundation of our great house."***

Ashwath Kumar delivers his winning oration at the 77th National Oratorical Contest in Indianapolis on April 6. Photo by Lucas Carter

AMERICANISM

Missouri teen wins 77th Oratorical Contest

Ashwath Kumar of Columbia, Mo., won The American Legion's 77th National Oratorical Contest – and an $18,000 college scholarship – for his oration, "This Great House."

Herbert Williams Post 202 of Columbia sponsored Kumar, who is a senior at David H. Hickman High School. This is the second year in a row that a contestant from Missouri won first place in the Legion's high school speech competition.

Kumar said that his goal was to "speak from the heart and not from the page. When I'm talking to a large audience, the emotions – you don't script them, they just come."

His winning oration likened the Constitution to a house with a solid foundation, able to weather conflict.

Brandon Posner of Doylestown, Pa., placed second and received a $16,000 college scholarship for his oration, "A Document of Unification." Albert R. Atkinson Jr. Post 210 of Doylestown sponsored Posner.

Ellen Densmore of Denver placed third and received a $14,000 college scholarship for her oration, "The Land of the Free." Paul C. Beck Post 23 in Aurora, Colo., sponsored Densmore.

Watch the winning oration:
www.legion.org/legiontv

MY GI BILL
VETERANS & EDUCATION
BY VALERIE HEFFNER

EDUCATION

The original GI Bill's education benefit

Q: *It doesn't matter now because I'm 86 years young, but I always wondered what the formula was for the amount of college education allowed under the GI Bill and the amount of wartime service. I was in the Navy from Sept. 6, 1945, to Oct. 27, 1948, but World War II officially ended Dec. 31, 1946. This gave me one year and four months of wartime service.*

How many months or years of schooling was I eligible to receive? I didn't go directly to college because I thought my GI Bill would run out in two years, and I couldn't afford to continue. Was I wrong?

A: World War II veterans were entitled to one year of full-time training plus time equal to their military service, up to 48 months. The Veterans Administration paid the university, trade school or employer up to $500 per year for tuition, books, fees and other training costs. Veterans also received small living allowances while they were in school. The delimiting date was no later than two years after either the date of discharge or the termination of the war.

Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Arizona.
askvalerie@legion.org

BUDGET

No consensus on defense spending

28 Percent of Americans who say the United States spends too much on defense

37 Percent who say the United States spends too little on defense

Sources: Gallup/*The Hill*

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PERSONAL FINANCE

VA-guaranteed loans an enviable deal

FOCUS ON FINANCES

J.J. MONTANARO

Recently, I told a friend about the great deal I got when I refinanced my VA-guaranteed home loan, and he was flabbergasted. "What a sweet program!" he said. "I wish I could get one of those."

Without military service, he's not eligible. But his reaction got me thinking about what a good deal this program is for those of us who have worn the uniform. I guess I'd taken it for granted.

If the possibility of rising interest rates or higher home prices has you contemplating a new home loan or refinancing an old loan, don't forget about our old friend, the VA home loan. VA's website, **www.va.gov**, is a comprehensive resource for information on these loans, but here's a quick refresher on some key aspects of the current program:

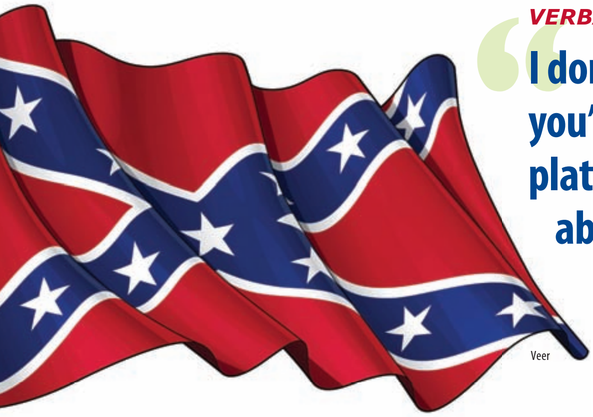
- **VA doesn't loan out any money.** Contrary to what many believe, VA isn't in the business of making loans. They just guarantee them. You'll go through a normal lender, and you'll still have to prove your creditworthiness and income during the application process.
- **Eligibility is wide-open.** You could be eligible with as few as 90 days of active service during wartime or six months during peacetime. Reservists, Guardsmen and spouses of those who died in service or from a service-connected disability may also be eligible. Not that long ago, you had to work through a relatively burdensome process to get a certificate of eligibility from VA. Today, that process is easy and usually automated through the VA website or most lenders that handle VA loans.
- **Primary residence.** VA loans can only be used for your primary residence, not for rentals or vacation homes. However, although it's relatively complex, it is possible to have two VA loans at the same time. For example, if you bought with a VA loan and moved because of a job change, you might be able to use your remaining entitlement to get another VA loan and buy your new primary residence.
- **No down payment and no PMI.** I think this was the point of greatest envy for my friend. With a conventional loan, you'll typically need to bring a 20 percent down payment to the table or be required to purchase private mortgage insurance. Not so with the VA loan. Unless you're receiving VA disability compensation, VA loans require you to pay a tax-deductible funding fee (typically 2.15 percent of the loan), but not a down payment or PMI.
- **Refinance options.** You can also use a VA loan to refinance a conventional loan or another VA loan. If you've already got a VA loan, the Interest Rate Reduction Refinance Loan is a pretty great option. I know; I've used it twice. It has just a 0.5 percent funding fee, and there's no appraisal or financial underwriting required by VA (lender's requirements may vary).
- **Buyer takeover.** VA loans allow another VA-eligible loan buyer to step in and assume your loan. If interest rates eventually spike, this could be a nice feature. While the new buyer would have to come up with the cash difference between the loan value and the house's market value, the terms of the loan could be a lot more favorable and the cost of the transaction substantially less.
- **It's not one and done.** Contrary to myth, you can use a VA loan more than once. If you've paid it off and no longer own the home, you are eligible again for a new VA loan.

The VA loan powered a generation of post-World War II homeowners. Almost 70 years later, it's still a valuable, attractive benefit that's worth investigating – even if it's been decades since you wore the uniform.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Submit questions for him online.

www.legion.org/focusonfinances

VERBATIM



Veer

> **"I don't think that we could block it, frankly .... you're not going to see very many of these license plates. It's something for national folks to talk about. In Georgia, we're moving on."**

Jason Carter, Georgia state senator and grandson of President Jimmy Carter, suggesting that if elected governor he would not stop the issuing of license plates featuring the Confederate flag. He added that he'd prefer to see plates that celebrate Georgia's civil-rights legacy.

Source: Talking Points Memo

EDUCATION

A second chance

BY BOB McCULLOUGH

Many of the students enrolled at Greystone Prep School weren't able to get an appointment to one of the five U.S. military academies on the first attempt. But in the past decade, 153 Greystone students have earned second chances and congressional nominations to academies.

Located on the campus of Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas, Greystone was established in 2004 by Cmdr. David Bailey, who was turned down 37 years ago in his first bid to attend the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. But he refused to give up and is now an alumnus.

Bailey established the civilian prep school to give high school graduates another shot at an appointment to a military academy, and to prepare them for the rigors of academy life. The name comes from New Zealand explorer Sir Edmund Hillary, who looked for grey stone when climbing because it indicated strong granite composition.

Likewise, Greystone demands strength and resolve from its students, who commit to 38 semester hours, physical conditioning, room inspections, community service projects that average 100 hours a year and intramural sports. Students following an honor code and standards of conduct developed under the guidance of the late Pat Tinley, a longtime American Legion member.

Greystone Prep School

Military academies are "leadership institutions creating the generals and admirals who will be leading us 25 or 30 years down the road," Bailey says. "I take great pride in knowing Greystone is helping some of our future military leaders get off on the right trajectory."

Retired Air Force Col. Bill Crum, chairman of the Greystone board of directors and a Legionnaire, often conducts mock interviews to help students prepare for congressional interviews for academy appointments. Citing the Legion's motto, "For God and Country," he says that Greystone "might be considered the poster child for that theme."

Learn more about Greystone Prep School:

greystoneprepschool.org

Bob McCullough is a retired Air Force public affairs officer.

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How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** fax **(317) 630-1280,** e-mail **reunions@legion.org** or submit information via our website, **www.legion.org/reunions.**

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are publicized free of charge.

Your notice will appear on our Web site within a week and will remain available online until the final day of your reunion. Upon submission, please allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing only once a year.** Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** fax **(317) 630-1280** or e-mail **reunions@legion.org.**

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.** Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

1st Flt Det (Nha Trang AB, Vietnam, 1964-1972), Las Vegas, 10/19-24, Roger Gibson, (228) 209-1181, rgibson2403@aol.com; **4th FIW 334th, 335th & 336th FIS & Support Personnel,** Goldsboro, NC, 9/10-13, Carlo Romano, (301) 593-2266; **5th AAF 43rd Bomb Grp (H) – 63rd, 64th, 65th & 403rd Sqdns,** Washington, 8/27-31, Nancy Solomon, (941) 966-9212, nansolo.srq@gmail.com; **6th Bomb Wing (Walker AFB),** Roswell, NM, 9/19-20, Bobby Pike, (479) 452-7191, bbpik@aol.com; **20th & 81st TFW,** The Villages, FL, 10/8-12, Gregory Vogel, (352) 633-6029, gvogel55@yahoo.com; **28th Wing (Ellsworth AFB, SD),** Rapid City, SD, 8/28-9/1, Bob Regets, (315) 406-9002, fatherbob1234@yahoo.com; **36th TFW & 525th FIS,** Seattle, 9/12-15, Dean Yarolimek, (636) 447-5029, d.yarolimek@sbcglobal.net; **39th FS,** Washington, 10/15-19, Lyndon Haddock, (719) 687-6425, comm63@mac.com; **47th Air Police,** Carolina Beach, NC, 10/6-8, Stokely Davis, (336) 583-2938; **49th FS (WWII-2014),** Dayton, OH, 9/10-14, Ron Morrissette, (972) 530-4647, ronmorr1@verizon.net; **61st FIS (Newfoundland, 1950s),** Mount Clemens, MI, 9/18-20, Charles Christianson, (763) 360-5681, cncask4it@gmail.com; **79th Ftr Bomb Sqdn,** Baton Rouge, LA, 10/2-4, Lonnie Collins, (803) 892-3928, locollins@pbtcomm.net; **79th TFS (Woodbridge, England),** Dayton, OH, 9/15-19, Roy Schmidt, (859) 746-8289, chillie764@aol.com; **90th SRW,** Branson, MO, 10/22-25, Chuck Hale, (785) 865-5794, chucknhale@gmail.com; **317th TC (All Eras),** Lawton, OK, 10/16-19, Jim Timmons, (410) 255-2735, jimt0708@aol.com; **366th SPS K-9 (Da Nang AB),** Mountain Home AFB, ID, 9/11-14, Steven Luz, (209) 668-4787, luz7963@yahoo.com; **405th Bomb Sqdn (Laon, France),** Branson, MO, 9/22-27, Bob Wootten, (785) 242-8187, bawootten@yahoo.com; **525th FIS,** Branson, MO, 10/10-13, Frank Litt, (817) 294-1136, 525bulldogs@sbcglobal.net; **526th FIS/TFS,** Savannah, GA, 10/7-9, Monte Johnson, (815) 347-7353, monte.j@att.net; **623rd AC&W Assn (Okinawa, 1946-2014),** Charleston (Mount Pleasant), SC, 9/28-10/1, Stan Duro, (843) 650-4969, sduro@att.net; **692nd Radar Sqdn,** Baudette, MN, 7/3-9, Alan Phillippe, (218) 766-3385, fishinflip56@aol.com; **1041st Sec Police Sqdn (Test),** Cleveland, TX, 10/2-5, Bill Revell, (936) 767-4868, peregrine1041@yahoo.com; **6937th & 2008th Comm Grp (Pakistan, 1959-1970),** Detroit, 8/14-17, Rick Biggs, (586) 255-7004, rbiggs@frontier.com; **AAF/USAF Crash Rescue Boat Assn,** Myrtle Beach, SC, 10/20-22, Robert Frankovich, (864) 868-6477, afskipper@bellsouth.net; **C123s in SE Asia,** Branson, MO, 11/7-11, Sue Rice, (417) 872-9750, srice@centurytel.net; **Laredo AFB,** San Antonio, 10/14-16, Ron Hunt, (937) 426-0867, gerrymarie@aol.com; **Nuclear Wpns Techs Assn,** Knoxville/Oak Ridge, TN, 9/18-20, Robert Welz, (502) 645-3181, rwelz@aye.net; **Society of AF Nurses, North Central Region,** Springfield, IL, 8/21-24, Peter Jefferson, (815) 867-7703, pjcj@rocketmail.com; **Trp Carrier/Tactical Airlift Assn,** Tucson, AZ, 10/15-19, Jim Esbeck, (520) 297-7475, jimezz@comcast.net; **Westover AFB AFSPPF – 8th Recon Tech Sqdn, 497th Recon Tech Grp, 6594th Test Sqdn, 7405th & 7499th Support Grps,** Dayton, OH, 9/28-10/3, Dick Temple, (703) 786-4743, commander77dt@aol.com

ARMY

2nd Inf Div, Omaha, NE, 9/16-20, Bob Haynes, (224) 225-1202, 2idahq@comcast.net; **7th Armd Div (WWII),** Baltimore, 9/24-28, C. Higley, (860) 678-1018, cmhig58@sbcglobal.net; **7th Sqdn 1st Air Cav 1st Avn Bde "Blackhawks" (Fort Knox, KY & Vinh Long, Vietnam, 1967-1972),** Fernandina Beach, FL, 8/21-24, Mike O'Reilly, (561) 512-7630, m.b.oreilly@hotmail.com; **13th Eng (C) Bn Assn,** St. Robert, MO, 9/25-27, Billy Quinton, (727) 323-1144, cottop@aol.com; **17th Inf Rgt (Buffalo),** Tacoma, WA, 9/4-7, Steve Goodwin, (773) 263-2619, scout417@yahoo.com; **20th Eng BG,** Appleton, WI, 7/24-26, Art Halmstad, (920) 738-5326, arthurhalmstad@yahoo.com; **23rd Inf Rgt 2nd Indianhead Div (Korean War),** Lisle, IL, 9/23-27, Jim Coulos, (630) 232-2042, jgbron@stny.rr.com; **24th Trans Co,** Fort Riley, KS, 7/18-19, Ronald Dunlap, (540) 877-3542, retread@24thtruckmasters.net; **30th FA Bn,** Urbana, IL, 9/11-13, Charles Ries, (319) 436-2079; **52nd Personnel Serv Co & 593rd GS Grp (Qui Nhon, Vietnam, 1966-1974),** St. Louis, 7/18-20, Dick Furman, (407) 617-1270, rafurman@netzero.net; **79th Eng,** Branson, MO, 10/15-18, Mason Beck, (319) 558-8227; **80th Div 3rd Army,** Hagerstown, MD, 8/13-16, Jeff Wignall, (978) 532-0741, member9219@aol.com; **96th FA Bn (Korea, 1950-1955),** Branson, MO, 9/18-20, Frank Lewandowski, (440) 255-2118, fslewand@att.net; **120th Trans Co,** Manhattan Beach, CA, 10/2-5, James Alfaro, (310) 545-3418, jalfaro@alfa-corp.com; **178th/132nd Assault Support Heli Co & 400th Trans Co,** Manassas, VA, 9/24-28, Bill Sly, (703) 368-0816, bill@billauto.com; **248th Supply Co (Qui Nhon, Vietnam),** Columbus, OH, 6/7, Rob Beam, (269) 969-2421, randjbeam@comcast.net; **284th Eng Cbt Bn,** Newport, RI, 11/7-9, Clarence Bachand, (508) 248-7225, cbachand@charter.net; **304th Sig Opns Bn (All Yrs),** Branson, MO, 9/16-18, Eber Janzen, (608) 524-3631, budsmart1@yahoo.com; **458th TC, PBR, DUKW, LARC (1947-1977),** Cincinnati, 9/16-20, Jim Winstead, (417) 894-2805, pbrmp@sbcglobal.net; **509th Eng Co (PB) (Vietnam, 1965-1971),** Fort Worth, TX, 9/4-7, Jerry Sexton, (405) 373-0354, lindasexton@sbcglobal.net; **512th MP Co,** Tucson, AZ, 8/1-3, B.J. Searcy, (520) 456-1229, dbjsearcy@powerc.net; **561st Cbt Support (GS) (Camp Holloway, Pleiku, Vietnam),** Junction City, KS, 10/10-11, Ed Yaw, (585) 889-4726, esy1947@yahoo.com; **716th MP (Vietnam),** Des Moines, IA, 8/22-24, Duane Hursey, (712) 544-2662, jdeh@fmctc.com; **864th Eng Bn,** San Diego, 10/22-26, Earl "Skip" Semler, (619) 370-9121, reunion864th_2014@yahoo.com; **Alaska Polar Bear Patch,** St. Louis, 9/8-12, Don Bayt, (727) 289-6668, conniebayt@msn.com; **ASA Europe (Frankfurt, Germany, 1959-1965),** Columbus, OH, 9/24-27, John Minken, (717) 533-4652, minkenj@aol.com; **Assn of 3rd Armd Div,** Nashville, TN, 7/16-20, Paul Smith, (615) 351-9972, president@3ad.org; **CSC 1/509th ABCT Eng Plt (Boscomantico, Italy, 1973-1976),** Oak Ridge, TN, 6/12-14, Gregg Ponke, (810) 217-4814, greggponke@gmail.com; **Delta Co 1/20th Bn 11th LIB Americal Div,** Bowling Green, KY, 10/2-5, Wendell Strode, (270) 467-8814, strode@corvettemuseum.org; **Fort Campbell Honor Guard Co (1954-1958),** Branson, MO, 9/15-19, O.V. Guthrie, (870) 403-8868; **HHC 1st Support Bde,** Atlantic City, NJ, 9/15-19, Ron Walker, (509) 853-6313, soulmatesrp@gmail.com; **OV-1 Mohawk Assn,** Dallas, 9/4-6, Paul Jacobsen, (763) 493-2428, pej@reagan.com; **Society of the Fifth Div (WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Panama),** Nashville, TN, 9/25-29, Bobby Moody, (864) 859-9952; **Vets of the 1st Eng Cbt Bn,** Alexandria, VA, 9/12-14, Ron Labinski, (913) 362-6468, ron.labinski@gmail.com

COAST GUARD

***Southwind* WAGB 280,** Williamsburg, VA, 9/18-20, Edward Clancy, (904) 242-9070, clancyedward@bellsouth.net; ***Spencer* W 36/905,** Key West, FL, 9/25-28, Bob Marzen, (570) 325-4414, marzenh@netzero.net

JOINT

Berlin Airlift Vets Assn (BAVA), Nashville, TN, 9/30-10/3, J.W. Studak, (512) 452-0903; **Brady AB/Camp Hakata, Japan (Services, NSA & Civilians of All Eras),** Golden, CO, 9/11-14, Gus Cone, (253) 531-1783, guscone@msn.com; **European Theater of Operations Assns,** Tour of Rome, Florence, Venice & Milan, 10/7-16, Sy Canton, (207) 703-0819

MARINES

1st Mar Div Assn, Charleston, SC, 8/10-17, June Cormier, (760) 967-8561, june.oldbreed@sbcglobal.net; **2/3/3 Vietnam,** Baraboo, WI, 8/6-10, Art Ward, (860) 589-4838, artw47@aol.com; **Bravo Co 7th Motor Trans Bn (Vietnam),** San Diego, 10/1-3, Tim Weddington, (816) 808-2357, timweddington@comcast.net; **Lima Co 3rd Bn 1st Mar (Vietnam),** Quantico, VA, 9/11-14, Nick Carter, (507) 280-4000, limathreeone@gmail.com; **Mar Air Grps (WWII-2014),** Branson, MO, 10/1-4, James Jordan, (417) 535-4945, james.m.jordan@hughes.net; **Sasebo Naval Base,** San Diego, 10/7-9, Jim Abraham, (949) 433-

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NAVY

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COMRADES IN DISTRESS

COM 7th Fleet – *Oklahoma City* CLG 5 & *Providence* CLG 7 (Da Nang Harbor, Vietnam, Sept 1965-Sept 1967). James B. Hamilton needs witnesses to verify his service at this location and that he was exposed to Agent Orange. CID 1503

COM DES FLOT 5 (Pearl Harbor, Dec 1972-June 1973). John M. Serwatka needs witnesses to verify that he picked up 50-gallon, orange-striped gray drums at ship docks and transported them by truck to Hickam AFB Hangar 3. CID 1506

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8th TFS 49th TFW Black Sheep (1966-1970), Jim Braswell, (775) 230-8006, jtbras@gmail.com

11th Eng Bn Cbt Grp A, B & C Cos (South Korea, 1968-1971), Thomas "Tim" Trexler, (440) 259-3710, linatrexler@roadrunner.com

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A snooze button is no substitute for no alarm clock at all.

A COUPLE visiting the big city found themselves arguing in the back of a cab over places to visit.

"I want to go to Neiman Marcus," the wife said.

"And where am I supposed to go?" the husband asked.

The cab driver leaned back and offered, "There are several lovely banks in the area."

A YOUNG BOY approached a passing businessman and asked, "Shine your shoes, sir?"

"No," the man snapped.

"So shiny you can see your face in them?"

"No! Get lost!" the man shouted.

The boy walked away, but not before muttering, "Coward."

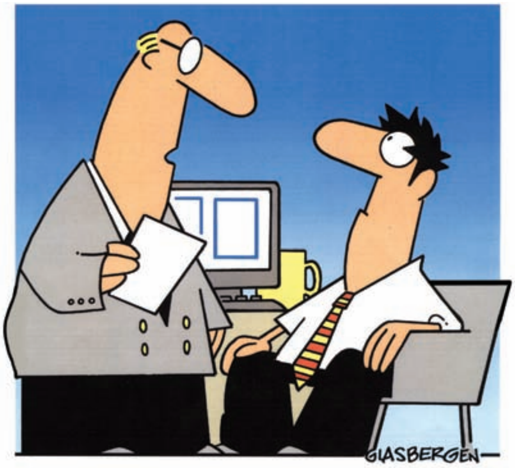
A COUPLE attended a marriage seminar on communication.

"It's essential that husbands and wives know the things that are important to each other," the instructor said. He turned to the husband and asked, "Can you name your wife's favorite flower?"

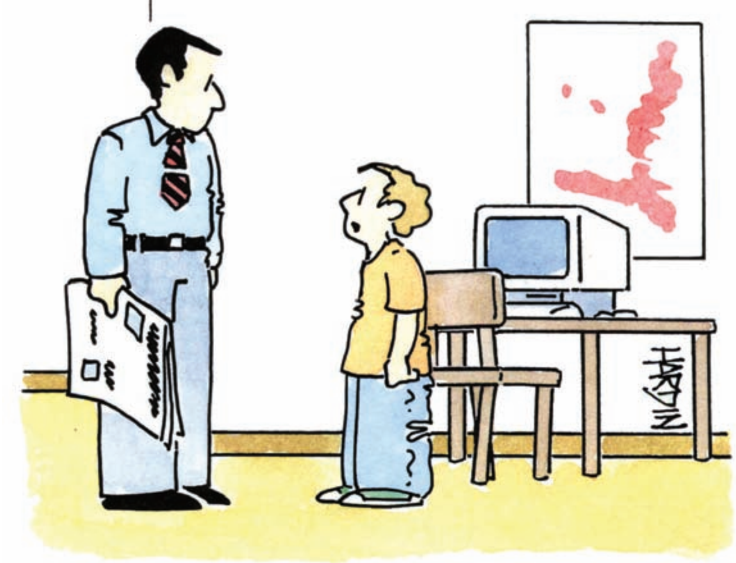
The man leaned over to his wife and whispered, "It's Pillsbury, right?"

A TEACHER gave her class a lecture on the human body. She asked the first graders if they knew that there is a fire burning in the body all the time.

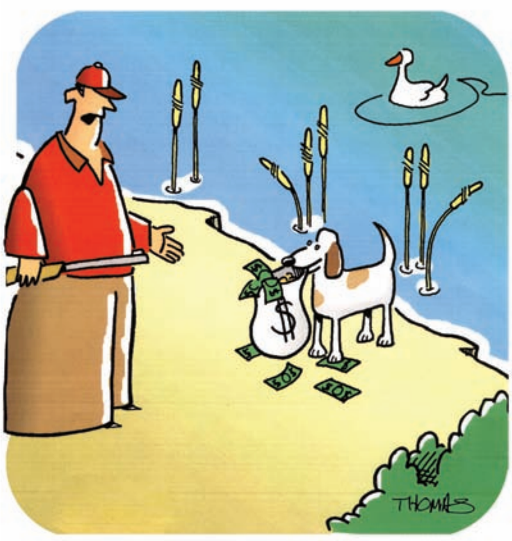
One girl raised her hand and answered, "Yes. When it's cold I can see the smoke."



"I'm sending you to anger management class so you can learn how to stop making me lose my temper."



"Dad, you've heard of kids who make millions with their computers, right? Well, some of us lose millions, too."



"It ain't no ring-necked pheasant, but it'll do."

TWO NORMAN SOLDIERS were relaxing after the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

"What a battle! What a victory!" one exclaimed. "Think of it – someday, children at their lessons will read about this as one of the turning points in history. And we were there."

"Perhaps," the other replied. "But I think they will be shielded from most of the details."

"Why?" the first soldier asked. "They need to know what happened here."

The other shook his head and replied, "Too much Saxon violence."

"THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE is encouraging grandparents to read their grandchildren bedtime stories about nutrition. Stories like 'Goodnight Kale,' 'James and the Giant Organic Peach,' and 'The Little Engine That Could, Thanks to His High-Fiber Diet.'" – *Seth Meyers*

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The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a warning to all physicians prescribing ACTOS®. The FDA is also aware of a recent epidemiological study conducted in France, which suggests an increased risk of bladder cancer with pioglitazone. Based on the results of this study, France has suspended the use of pioglitazone and Germany has recommended not to start pioglitazone in new patients.

The jury, after a 12 week trial in the Western District of the United States District Court in Louisiana presided over by the Honorable Rebecca Doherty, rendered a verdict in favor of the plaintiff Mr. & Mrs. Terrence Allen as follows:

- $1,475,000 in compensatory damages
- $6 billion in punitive damages against Takeda
- $3 billion in punitive damages against Eli Lilly

The jury found Takeda 75% liable and Eli Lilly, an American pharmaceutical company, 25% liable and their verdict for and on behalf of the Allens' for compensatory damages was $1,475,000, which included a loss of consortium claim for and on behalf of Susan Allen, the wife of Terrence Allen. The verdict also rendered substantial punitive damage awards and the actual jury question and answer is as follows:

1. What amount, if any, do you award in Punitive Damages as to each of the Defendants: Takeda: $6,000,000,000; Eli Lilly and Company: $3,000,000,000

Presently, there are jury trials pending in Las Vegas, Nevada where one trial has already been held and trials have been completed in Los Angeles, California and Baltimore, Maryland and more are scheduled to begin.

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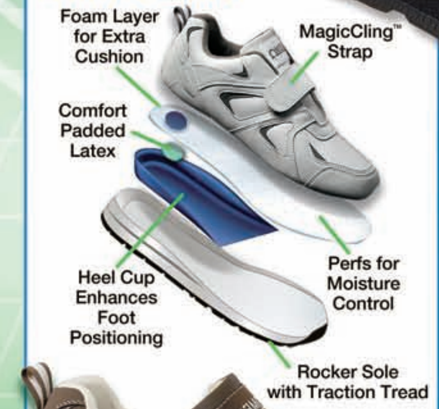
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